

The History of Civilization

Edited by C K Ogden, M A

Caste and Race in India

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Caste and Race in India

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PREFACE

IN the following pages I have made an attempt to give my views on the history and the origin of the caste-system as it was in the past and is to-day among the Hindus of India As regards caste in recent and contemporary times, I have purposely restricted the treatment to the institution as it is found among the Hindus Whatever elements of caste happen to occur among the other communities of India are derivative, and as such do not serve to illuminate the problem of caste

While writing about an institution which has been studied by scholars for over half a century, one receives intellectual stimulation on its many aspects from various authors One's obligations to them are too indirect and indefinite to be mentioned in specific references And when such references are made, they often do not measure the scope of one's obligations In the present book I find myself in this situation with respect to some writers on the subject of caste, notably J C Nesfield, Professor E W Hopkins, E Senart, Sir H H Risley, and Dr S V Ketkar I have derived great benefit from their works, for which my sincere thanks are due to them

Many of my friends have done me the honour of contributing something or other in connection with this work Professor A S Altekar, of Benares, has read in manuscript the third and fourth chapters, and has made some useful suggestions Mr S R Deshpande, of Bombay, has particularly helped me in reading the proofs and making a few corrections Professor D R Gadgil, of Poona, has read the whole manuscript, and enabled me to improve it very much by his penetrating criticisms Dr E J Thomas, of Cambridge, has helped me to avoid many pitfalls, and to insert the diacritical marks, so essential for proper pronunciation To all of them I am grateful for their ready and generous help

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CASTE AND RACE IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

FEATURES OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

A FOREIGN visitor to India is struck by the phenomenon known as the caste system He may not understand the full working of the system, but he is aware of the fact that Hindu society is divided into groups, known as castes, with varying degrees of respectability and circles of social intercourse Baines observes "It needs but a very short time in the country to bring home to the most casual observer the ubiquity of the institution, and to make him acquainted with some of the principal exoteric features "[1] This is due not only to the fact that caste is the most general form of social organization in India but also because it presents such a marked contrast to the social grouping prevalent in Europe or America Owing to these two features—ubiquity and strangeness—the institution has found many able scholars devoted to its study With all the labours of these students, however, we do not possess a real general definition of caste It appears to us that any attempt at definition is bound to fail because of the complexity of the phenomenon On the other hand, much literature on the subject is marred by lack of precision about the use of the term Hence we propose to give a description of the factors underlying this system of castes

The earliest account of this institution, given by a foreigner of the third century B C, mentions two of the features characterizing it before it was modified by the close cultural contact with Western Europe during the last century "It is not permitted to contract marriage with a person of another caste, nor to change from one profession or trade to another, nor for the same person to undertake more than one, except he is of the caste of philosophers, when permission is given

[1] Baines, p 11

on account of his dignity "[1] Though this statement of Megasthenes brings two of the most salient features of the institution to the forefront, yet it fails to give a complete idea of the system

The outstanding features of Hindu society when it was ruled by the social philosophy of caste, unaffected by the modern ideas of rights and duties, may be discerned to be six

(1) *Segmental Division of Society* —This caste-society was not a more or less homogeneous community in which, whatever distinctions of social status may exist, they are so much in the background that a special inquiry has to be made in order to realize their presence, but a society in which various groups with distinct appellations were prominent Castes were groups with a well-developed life of their own, the membership whereof, unlike that of voluntary associations and of classes, was determined not by selection but by birth The status of a person depended not on his wealth as in the classes of modern Europe, but on the traditional importance of the caste in which he had the luck of being born On the distinction between caste and class, as far only as cleavage into well-marked groups is concerned, MacIver observes "Whereas in eastern civilizations the chief determinant of class and status was birth, in the western civilization of to-day wealth is a class-determinant of equal or perhaps greater importance, and wealth is a less rigid determinant than birth it is more concrete, and thus its claims are more easily challenged, itself a matter of degree, it is less apt to create distinctions of kind, alienable, acquirable, and transferable, it draws no such permanent lines of cleavage as does birth "[2] To restrict ourselves to the Marathi region, a person is born either a Brahmin, Prabhu, Maratha, Vani, Sonar, Sutar, Bhandari, Chambhar, or a Mahar, etc If he chances to take a vocation which is not earmarked for a particular caste—say the military—he remains a casteman all the same A Brahmin general and a Maratha general, though of equal status in the army, belong to two different status-groups in their private life and there could not be any social intercourse between them on equal terms But this is not the case in a class society where status is determined

[1] Quotation from Megasthenes' account in Wilson, vol i, p 347
[2] p 124, footnote

by vocation and consequent income A class has no council, standing or occasional, to regulate the conduct and guide the morals of its members, apart from the laws of the community as a whole Members of one class follow different vocations, which, when organized, possess standing executive committees, which govern the members of their profession according to their rules These rules generally exclude the legitimate province of the wider community, and refer only to professional etiquette or economic gain "In the case of the brain-working professions, these common rules and this authoritative direction seek to prescribe such matters as the qualifications for entry, the character of the training, the methods of remuneration, the conditions of employment, the rules of behaviour towards fellow professionals and the public, the qualifications and methods of selection for public appointments, and the terms of service, the maintenance of the status of the profession, and the power of expulsion "[1] Most of the castes on the other hand, excepting the high ones like the Brahmin[2] and the Rajput, have regular standing councils deciding on many more matters than those taken cognizance of by the committees of the trade unions, associations, or guilds, and thus encroaching on the province of the whole community How the Brahmin and other high castes managed their affairs is not quite clear, but in the case of the Brahmins of Southern India at least, it seems from an epigraphic record that as occasion arose they used to call a special meeting of the members of the caste[3] The assembly could get its decree executed by the king's officials The governing body of a caste is called the Panchayat Some of the offences dealt with by it are (*a*) eating, drinking, or having similar dealings with a caste or sub-caste, with which such social intercourse is held to be forbidden, (*b*) keeping as concubine a woman of another caste, (*c*) seduction of or adultery with a married woman, (*d*) fornication, (*e*) refusal to fulfil a promise of marriage, (*f*) refusing to send a wife to her husband when old enough, (*g*) refusing to maintain a wife, (*h*) non-payment of debt, (*i*) petty assaults,

[1] *The New Statesman*, Special Supplement, 28th April, 1917, p 38

[2] Gujarat Brahmins do have such councils See Borradaile's *Gujarat Caste rules*, translated into Gujarati by Mangaldas Nathoobhoy

[3] Hultsch, i, No 56

(j) breaches of the customs of the trade peculiar to the caste, (k) encroaching on another's clientele, and raising or lowering prices, (l) killing a cow or any other forbidden animal, (m) insulting a Brahmin, (n) defying the customs of the caste regarding feasts, etc, during marriage and other ceremonies[1] It will be seen from this list that some of the offences tried by the governing bodies of castes were such as are usually dealt with by the State in its judicial capacity Thus, a caste was a group with a separate arrangement for meting out justice to its members apart from that of the community as a whole, within which the caste was included as only one of the groups Hence the members of a caste ceased to be members of the community as a whole, as far as that part of their morals which is regulated by law was concerned[2] This quasi sovereignty of the caste is particularly brought to notice by the fact that the caste council was prepared to re-try criminal offences decided by the courts of law[3] This means that in this caste-bound society the amount of community-feeling must have been restricted, and that the citizens owed moral allegiance to their castes first, rather than to the community as a whole By segmental division we wish to connote this aspect of the system The punishments that these councils awarded were (1) Out-casting, either temporary or permanent, (2) fines, (3) feasts to be given to the castemen, (4) corporal punishment, and (5) sometimes religious expiation The proceeds of the fines were generally spent on a common feast Sometimes the perquisites of the Panchayat were bought out of them and sometimes again they were devoted to charitable purposes[4] This description of the activities of a caste council will enable us to appreciate the remark, "The caste is its own ruler"[5] The diversity in the administration of law necessarily led to differences in moral standards of the various castes There was thus created a cultural gulf between the castes We may note some of the items of

[1] *United Provinces Census*, 1911, p 337, also cf Hamilton, i, p 110, Kerr, pp 316–19, Martin, vol iii, pp 179–80, and Steele, pp 150–1

[2] The result of this fact is to be seen in the departure of the customs of many castes from the rules laid down in the Hindu sacred laws See Steele, p 124 and Appendix A

[3] *United Provinces Census*, 1911, p 337

[4] *Bengal Census*, 1911, pp 467–9

[5] Ibid, p 487

cultural differences among the castes to bring out clearly the implications of this segmentation Many of the castes have their special deities Among such castes from Southern India the following may be noted Komati, Kamsala, Gamalla, Idiga, Mala, and Madiga [1], from the Central Provinces, Ahir [2], and from the United Provinces, Aheriya, Bahaliya, Kharwar, Koiwa, Chero, Bhuiyar, Dom, Musahar, and Nai [3] About the differences in religious outlook of the Madras castes it has been said "Amongst the Brahmin community this one fact stands off clear and distinct, that they do not indulge in the worship of Grāma Devatā, the village gods, to which the aboriginal population almost exclusively bows down" [4] The customs about marriage and death vary widely among the different castes Brahmins did not permit widow-marriage nor tolerate concubinage as a caste practice This could not be said of many lower castes Not only were there such differences in cultural matters among the different castes, but in theory also different standards of conduct were upheld Thus the Brahmin Government of Poona, while passing some legislation prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquors, excluded the Bhandaris, Kolis and similar other castes from the operation thereof, but strictly forbade the use of drink to Brahmins, Shenvis, Prabhus and Government officers [5] This variety of morals and customs was so manifest that the early British Courts in India not merely asked the opinion of their pundits, but took the evidence of the heads of the castes concerned as to their actual usages The collection of laws and customs of Hindu castes, made by Steele under the orders of Government, was intended to help the courts to ascertain the diverse customs [6] The Hindus have no standing arrangements for the disposal of their dead When any person dies it is the caste-fellows who are to be invited to carry the corpse to the cremation-ground and to dispose of it At the time of marriage a feast has, by common consent, to be given to

[1] *Godavari Dist Gaz*, vol i, p 48
[2] Russell, ii, p 31
[3] Crooke, i, pp 45, 109, ii, pp 93, 219, 326, iii, 247, 332, iv, 33, 43
[4] *Madras Census*, 1871, p 137
[5] M G Ranade in *JBBRAS*, vol xx, p 476
[6] Mayne, p 45 N B —Elphinstone wrote "What we call Hindu Law applies to Brahmins only, each caste has separate laws and customs" (quoted in Romesh Dutt's *India under Early British Rule*, p 332)

all the members of one's own caste resident in the village or the town At the preparation of these feasts as well as in connection with other items of the marriage ceremony it is again the caste people who run to one's help These and similar affairs of everyday life require the co-operation of one's caste-people Hence castes are small and complete social worlds in themselves, marked off definitely from one another, though subsisting within the larger society

(2) *Hierarchy*—In our discussion of the subject so far we have used the comparative degree with reference to the status of different castes, thus assuming beforehand one of the principal characteristics of the caste society, viz the hierarchy of the groups Everywhere in India there is a definite scheme of social precedence amongst the castes, with the Brahmin as the head of the hierarchy Only in Southern India the artisan castes " have always maintained a struggle for a higher place in the social scale than that allowed to them by Brahmanical authority There is no doubt as to the fact that the members of this great caste [Kammalan] dispute the supremacy of the Brahmins, and that they hold themselves to be equal in rank with them " John Fryer, who visited India in 1670, seems to refer to this attitude [1] In any one of the linguistic divisions of India there are as many as two hundred castes which can be grouped in classes whose gradation is largely acknowledged by all But the order of social precedence amongst the individual castes of any class cannot be made definite, because not only is there no ungrudging acceptance of such rank but also the ideas of the people on this point are very nebulous and uncertain The following observations vividly bring out this state of things " As the society now stands the place due to each community is not easily distinguishable, nor is any common principle of precedence recognized by the people themselves by which to grade the castes Excepting the Brahmin at one end and the admittedly degraded castes like the Holeyas at the other, the members of a large proportion of the intermediate castes think or profess to think that their caste is better than their neighbours' and should be ranked accordingly " [2] Martin remarks about Bihar that

[1] *Madras Census*, 1871, p 151 and footnote
[2] *Mysore Census*, 1901, p 400

the Śūdras there were usually divided into four classes but adds "The people, who assisted me in making up this account, could not with certainty refer each caste to its class, for they never had bestowed pains to enquire concerning the various claims of such low persons"[1]

(3) *Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse*—There are minute rules as to what sort of food or drink can be accepted by a person and from what castes But there is very great diversity in this matter The practices in the matter of food and social intercourse divide India into two broad belts In Hindustan proper, castes can be divided into five groups, first, the twice-born castes, second, those castes at whose hands the twice-born can take "Pakka" food, third, those castes at whose hands the twice-born cannot accept any kind of food but may take water, fourth, castes that are not untouchable yet are such that water from them cannot be used by the twice-born, last come all those castes whose touch defiles not only the twice-born but any orthodox Hindu[2] All food is divided into two classes, "Kachcha" and "Pakka", the former being any food in the cooking of which water has been used, and the latter all food cooked in "ghi" without the addition of water "As a rule a man will never eat 'Kachcha' food unless it is prepared by a fellow caste-man, which in actual practice means a member of his own endogamous group, whether it be caste or sub-caste, or else by his Brahmin 'Guru' or spiritual guide"[3] But in practice most castes seem to take no objection to "Kachcha" food from a Brahmin[4] A Brahmin can accept "Kachcha" food at the hands of no other caste, nay, some of them, like the Kanaujia Brahmins, are so punctilious about these restrictions that, as a proverb has it, three Kanaujias require no less than thirteen hearths[5] As for the "Pakka" food, it may be taken by a Brahmin at the hands of some of the castes only[6] A man of higher caste cannot accept "Kachcha" food from one of the lower, though the latter may regale himself with similar food offered by a member of one of the castes accepted to be higher than his own

[1] Martin, vol ii, p 466
[2] *U P Census*, 1901, p 227
[3] *U P Census*, 1911, p 328
[4] *U P Census*, 1901, p 212
[5] Risley (2), p 159
[6] *U P Census*, 1911, p 329

The ideas about the power of certain castes to convey pollution by touch are not so highly developed in Northern India as in the South The idea that impurity can be transmitted by the mere shadow of an untouchable or by his approaching within a certain distance does not seem to prevail in Hindustan No Hindu of decent caste would touch a Chamar, or a Dom , and some of the very low castes themselves are quite strict about contact Thus "The Bansphoi and Basor, themselves branches of the Dom caste, will touch neither a Dom nor a Dhobi, whilst the Basor, with all the intolerance of the parvenu, extends his objections to the Musahar, Chamar, Dharkai and Bhangi "[1]

In Bengal the castes are divided into two main groups (1) The Brahmins, and (2) the Śūdras The second class is further divided into four sub-classes, indicating their status as regards food and water (*a*) the Sat-Śūdra group includes such castes as the Kayasth and the Nabasakh, (*b*) then come the Jalacharaniya-Śūdras, " being those castes, not technically belonging to the Nabasakh group, from whom Brahmins and members of the higher castes can take water " , (*c*) then follow the Jalabyabahaiya Śūdras, castes from whose hands a Brahmin cannot take water , (*d*) last stand the Asprisya Śūdras, castes whose touch is so impure as to pollute even the Ganges water, and hence their contact must be avoided They are thus the untouchables[2] In the matter of food Western Bengal resembles Hindustan except in this that in Bengal there are some people who will not accept any " Kachcha " food even from the hands of a Brahmin " Pakka " food can be ordinarily taken not only from one's own or any higher caste, but also from the confectioner class, the Myras and Halwais[3] As regards the position of the untouchables the following observation will give a clear idea " Even wells are polluted if a low caste man draws water from them, but a great deal depends on the character of the vessel used and of the well from which water is drawn A masonry well is not so easily defiled as one constructed with clay pipes, and if it exceeds three and a half cubits in width so that a cow may turn round in

[1] *U P Census*, 1911, p 331
[2] Risley (1), vol ii, p 270
[3] *Bengal Census*, 1901, p 367

it, it can be used even by the lowest castes without defilement" Certain low castes are looked down upon as so unclean that they may not enter the courtyard of the great temples These castes are compelled to live by themselves on the outskirts of villages [1]

In Eastern and Southern Bengal [2] and in Gujarat and the whole of Southern India there is no distinction of food as "Kachcha" and "Pakka" for the purposes of its acceptance or otherwise from anyone but a member of one's own caste In Gujarat [3] and Southern India, generally speaking, a Brahmin never thinks of accepting water, much less any cooked food from any caste but that of the Brahmins, and similarly all the other castes or groups of castes more or less follow the principle of accepting no cooked food from any caste that stands lower than itself in the social scale This rule does not apply with the same strictness to accepting water Again as a rule, a lower caste has no scruples in accepting cooked food from any higher caste Thus all the castes will take cooked food from the Brahmin

The theory of pollution being communicated by some castes to members of the higher ones is also here more developed Theoretically, the touch of a member of any caste lower than one's own defiles a person of the higher caste, but in actual practice this rule is not strictly observed In the Maratha country the shadow of an untouchable is sufficient, if it falls on a member of a higher caste, to pollute him In Madras, and especially Malabar, this doctrine is still further elaborated, so that certain castes have always to keep a stated distance between themselves and the Brahmin and other higher castes so as not to defile the latter Thus the Shanar, toddy-tapper of Madras, contaminates a Brahmin if he approaches the latter within twenty-four paces [4] A Nayar may approach a Nambudiri Brahmin but must not touch him, while a Tiyan must keep himself at the distance of thirty-six steps from the Brahmin, and a Pulayan may not approach him within ninety-six paces A Tiyan must keep away from a Nayar at twelve paces, while some castes may approach the Tiyan, though they must not touch him A Pulayan must not come near any

[1] Ibid [2] Ibid [3] Forbes, ii, p 240 [4] Bhattacharya, p 255

of the Hindu castes So rigid are the rules about defilement which is supposed to be carried with them by all except the Brahmins, that the latter will not perform even their ablutions within the precincts of a Śūdra's habitation [1] Generally the washerman and barber that serve the general body of villagers, will not render their services to the unclean and untouchable castes, "Even a modern Brahmin doctor, when feeling the pulse of a Śūdra, first wraps up the patient's wrist with a small piece of silk so that he may not be defiled by touching his skin" [2]

(4) *Civil and Religious disabilities and privileges of the different sections*—Segregation of individual castes or of groups of castes in a village is the most obvious mark of civil privileges and disabilities, and it has prevailed in a more or less definite form all over India Southern India, as in the matter of ceremonial purity and untouchability, stands out distinct in the rigidity of these rules In Northern India generally, in the Maratha country and, as it appears, sometimes in the Telugu and Canarese regions, it is only the impure castes that are segregated and made to live on the outskirts of villages It does not seem that other groups of castes have distinct quarters of the town or village allotted to them excepting in parts of Gujarat In the Tamil and Malayalam regions very frequently different quarters are occupied by separate castes or sometimes the village is divided into three parts that occupied by the dominant caste in the village or by the Brahmins, that allotted to the Śūdras, and the one reserved for the Panchamas or untouchables In a village of the Ramnad District, the main portion is occupied by the Nayakars, shepherds, artisans, washermen, and barbers, forming a group living in the north east corner of the village, while the untouchables ply their trades in the north-west and south-east corners [3] In Trichinopoly district the villages have the houses arranged in streets "The Brahmin, Shudra and Panchama quarters are separate, and in the last of these the Pallans, Paraiyans and Chakkiliyans live in separate streets" [4] In Madras, Pallis or agriculturists live in separate quarters "distinctively known

[1] Wilson, vol ii, pp 74–5
[2] *Ency of R & E*, vol x, p 491 (*b*)
[3] Slater, p 38
[4] *Trichinopoly Dist Gaz*, vol i, p 81

as the Palli teru "[1] Sometimes, as in the district of Bellary, it is only the untouchable, like the Madiga, that is singled out for segregation, all other castes living in close proximity to one another[2] In some parts of the Maratha country castes have been allotted distinct quarters of the village and called by the name of the caste Brahmin ali, or wada, Prabhu-ali, Sonor-ali, etc The depressed classes, like the Mang, Mahar, etc , are forced to live on the outskirts of the village[3]

In Southern India certain parts of the town or village are inaccessible to certain castes The recent agitation by the impure castes to gain free access to certain streets in Vaikam in Travancore brings into clear relief some of the disabilities of these castes It is recorded that, under the rule of the Marathas and the Peshwas, the Mahars and Mangs were not allowed within the gates of Poona between 3 p m and 9 a m because before nine and after three their bodies cast too long a shadow, which, falling on a member of the higher castes—especially Brahmin—defiles him[4] However, in the Dravidian south, the very land of the supreme dominance of the Brahmin, the Brahmin was restricted in his rights of access to any part of the village It is well known that in a village which is a gift to the Brahmins, a Paraiyan is not allowed to enter the Brahmin quarter, but it is not known to many students that the Paraiyans will not permit a Brahmin to pass through their street, so much so that if one happens to enter their quarters they would greet him with cow-dung water "Brahmins in Mysore consider that great luck will await them if they can manage to pass through the Holeya (untouchables) quarter of a village unmolested "[5] All over India the impure castes are debarred from drawing water from the village well, which is used by the members of other castes In the Maratha country a Mahar—one of the untouchables—might not spit on the road lest a pure-caste Hindu should be polluted by touching it with his foot, but had to carry an earthen pot, hung from his neck, in which to spit Further he had to drag a thorny branch with him to wipe out his footprints and to lie at a distance prostrate on the

[1] Thurston, vi, p 16 [2] *Bellary Dist Gaz*, p 58 [3] Mann, p 108
[4] Russell, iv, p 189 [5] Thurston, vi, p 88

ground if a Brahmin passed by, so that his foul shadow might not defile the holy Brahmin [1] In the Punjab, where restrictions regarding pollution by proximity have been far less stringent than in other parts of India, a sweeper, while walking through the streets of the larger towns, was supposed to carry a broom in his hand or under his armpit as a mark of his being a scavenger and had to shout out to the people warning them of his polluting presence [2] The schools, maintained at public cost, are practically closed to such impure castes as the Chamars and Mahars "Both teachers and pupils in the schools make it most difficult for low-caste boys to sit in the class-rooms" [3]

In Dravidian India the disabilities of the lower castes went so far as to prescribe what sort of houses they should build and what material they might employ in the construction thereof The Shanars and Izhavas, toddy-tappers of the eastern and the western coasts, were not allowed to build houses above one storey in height [4] In Malabar the house is called by different names according to the occupant's caste, and peoples of inferior castes dare not refer to their own homes in the presence of Nambudiri Brahmin in more flattering terms than as "dung-heaps" [5]

In Gujarat the depressed castes used to wear a horn as their distinguishing mark [6] From certain decisions noted by the Peshwas in their diaries one can form some idea about the disabilities of some of the castes in the Maratha country The rulers upheld the claim of the potters, opposed by the carpenters, that they could lead their bridal processions on horse-back, and that of the copper-smiths, against the Lingayats, to go in procession through public streets [7] The toddy-tappers of Malabar and the east coast, Izhavas and Shanars, were not allowed to carry umbrellas, to wear shoes or golden ornaments, to milk cows or even to use the ordinary language of the country [8] In Malabar, Brahmins alone were permitted to sit on boards formed in the shape of a tortoise, and if a member of any other caste were to use such a seat he was liable to capital punishment [9] Members of all castes,

[1] Russell, i, pp 72–3 [2] *Punjab Census*, 1911, p 413
[3] Briggs, p 231 [4] Bhattacharya, p 259 [5] Logan, i, p 85
[6] *Ency of R & E*, ix, p 636 (b), also compare Forbes, ii, p 238
[7] Ranade, p 478 [8] Bhattacharya, p 259 [9] Wilson, ii, p 77

except the Brahmins, of S India were expressly forbidden to cover the upper part of their body above the waist [1] In the case of women also, until 1865 they were obliged by law to go with the upper part of their bodies quite bare, if they belonged to the Tiyan or other lower castes [2] Under the Peshwas a greater distinction was made in the punishment on account of the caste of the criminal than of the nature of the crime itself Hard labour and death were punishments mostly visited on the criminals of the lower castes [3]

In Madras there has been for ages a faction among the non-Brahmin castes dividing most of them into two groups, the right-hand castes and the left-hand castes The "right-hand" castes claim certain privileges which they strongly refuse to those of the "left-hand", viz riding on horse-back in processions, carrying standards with certain devices, and supporting their marriage booths on twelve pillars They insist that the "left hand" castes must not raise more than eleven pillars to the booth nor employ the devices on standards peculiar to the "right-hand" castes [4]

Brahmanic ceremonies are to be performed with the help of a ritual, and two types of rituals have been evolved the Vedic and the Puranic The Vedic ritual is based on the Vedic mantras and is regarded as of great sanctity, while the Puranic is based on formulæ of less sanctity, and not on revealed knowledge How great this feeling of sanctity about Vedic lore was can be gauged from the fact that in 1848 a Brahmin professor advised the Bombay Board of Education not to publish a certain book because it contained quotations from Pānini's grammar which, if printed, would be desecrated [5] The Śūdras are asked to content themselves with the latter ritual, while for the impure castes, a Brahmin, unless he is a pseudo-Brahmin or an apostate, would not minister at all It is only from the hands of the clean Śūdras, again, that a Brahmin will accept any gifts which are meant to store up merit for the donor Such an advanced caste as the Prabhus in the Maratha country had to establish its right of carrying on the sacred rites according

[1] Wilson, ii, p 79 [2] *Madras Census*, 1891, p 224

[3] G W Forrest, *Official Writings of Mountstuart Elphinstone*, 1884, pp 310–11

[4] *Madras Census*, 1871, p 129

[5] D V Potdar, *Marathi Gadyāchā Ingraji Avatār*, Appendix, pp 42–3

to the Vedic formulæ which was being questioned during the period of the later Peshwas[1] Certain sacraments cannot be performed by any other caste than the Brahmins The most sacred literature cannot be studied by the Śūdras No caste can employ any other priests than the Brahmins, with very few exceptions in Southern India The artisans of Madras seem to employ their own priests , and the goldsmith caste of the Maratha region established their right of employing their caste-fellows as priests during the last part of the Peshwa-rule[2] The innermost recesses of temples can only be approached by the Brahmins, clean Śūdras and other high castes having to keep outside the sacred precincts The impure castes, and particularly the untouchables, cannot enter even the outer portions of a temple but must keep to the courtyards In South Malabar, the high castes do not allow the Tiyans to cremate their dead[3]

A Brahmin never bows to anyone who is not a Brahmin, but requires others to salute him , and when he is saluted by a member of a non-Brahmin caste he only pronounces a benediction Some of the lower castes carry their reverence for the Brahmins, especially in Northern India, to such extremes that they will not cross the shadow of a Brahmin, and sometimes will not take their food without sipping water in which the big toe of a Brahmin is dipped The Brahmin, on the other hand, is so conscious of his superiority that he does not condescend to bow even to the idols of gods in a Śūdra's house[4] The Brahmin has been regarded as the most important subject, needing protection from the king, so much so that the king is styled the protector of the Brahmins and the cows, other subjects being regarded as too insignificant to be mentioned

In the Maratha country, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the great preacher Ramadas tried to inculcate in the minds of the people the idea of unity based on the bond of common locality During the latest period of the Peshwa-rule (latter half of the eighteenth century), however, this ideal dwindled into the orthodox one wherein Brahmins figure prominently, the State having no higher function than that of pampering them[5] Under the Hindu rulers the

[1] Ranade, p 478 [2] Ibid , p 478 [3] *Madras Census*, 1891, p 299
[4] Bhattacharya, pp 19–20 [5] Ranade, p 456

Brahmins must have secured to themselves many pecuniary privileges, denied to others, on the strength of this orthodox theory of the proper function of the State, and perhaps more because they happened to occupy the posts of importance Thus in the Maratha region during the period referred to above, the Konkanasth Brahmin clerks obtained the privilege of their goods being exempted from certain duties and their imported corn being carried to them without any ferry-charges Brahmin landholders of a part of the country had their lands assessed at distinctly lower rates than those levied from other classes Brahmins were exempted from capital punishment, and when confined in forts, they were more liberally treated than the other classes [1] Forbes makes the following observation "The Brahmins of Travancore, as in most other parts of India, have taken care to be exempted as much as possible from punishment, at least, their sentence is far more lenient than that passed on the other castes for the same crimes" [2] In Bengal the amount of rent for land frequently varied with the caste of the occupant [3]

(5) *Lack of choice of occupation*—Generally a caste or a group of allied castes considered some of the callings as its hereditary occupation, to abandon which in pursuit of another, though it might be more lucrative, was thought not to be right Thus a Brahmin thought that it was correct for him to be a priest, while the Chambhar regarded it as his duty to cure hides and prepare shoes This was only generally true, for there were groups of occupations like trading, agriculture, labouring in the field, and doing military service which were looked upon as anybody's, and most castes were supposed to be eligible for any of them [4] Among the artisans, occupations which were more or less of the same status were open to the members of these castes without incidental degradation No caste would allow its members to take to any calling which was either degrading, like toddy-tapping and brewing, or impure, like scavenging or curing hides

[1] Ibid , p 455
[2] James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, vol i, 1834, p 256
[3] Holt Mackenzie in *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company*, vol iii, 1832, p 216
[4] Rickards, i, p 29

It was not only the moral restraint and the social check of one's caste fellows that acted as a restraint on the choice of one's occupation, but also the restrictions put by other castes, which did not allow members other than those of their own castes to follow their callings Of such restrictive regulations there were in operation only those concerning the profession of priests, no one not born a Brahmin being allowed to be a priest The effect of these rules was that the priestly profession was entirely monopolized by the Brahmins, leaving aside the ministrants of the aboriginal deities, while they were seen plying any trade or calling which suited their tastes and which was not polluting The majority of the Konkanasth and Deshasth Brahmins of the Maratha country were devoted to secular pursuits, filling offices of every kind, including the village accountantship [1] During the Maratha upheaval and after, the Brahmins entered the profession of arms in fairly large numbers Before the Indian Mutiny the Kanaujia Brahmins used to enter the Bengal army as sepoys in large numbers [2] Some of the Rarhi Brahmins of Bengal accepted service under Mohammedan rulers [3] Some of the Brahmins of Rajputana serve their Marwadi masters [4] The majority of the Brahmins in the lower Carnatic, according to Buchanan, almost entirely filled the different offices in the collection of revenue and even acted as messengers [5] Of the Hindustani Brahmins of Central India it is said that a considerable population of them are concerned in trade [6] The Havig Brahmins of the Tulu country performed all kinds of agricultural labour excepting holding the plough [7] About the Kanaujia Brahmins of the United Provinces it is asserted that they even till the soil with their own hands, while shop-keeping and hawking form the main source of livelihood for the Sanadhya Brahmins of that region [8] In Rajputana the Brahmin is not only willing to do all the labour that his piece of land requires, but is also ready to sell his labour to other more fortunate occupants [9] Brahmins in Madras appear as civil, public, and military servants, traders, cultivators,

[1] Campbell, *Ethnology of India*, p 73
[2] Wilson, ii, 151, also compare Martin, vol i, p 111
[3] Bhattacharya, p 39 [4] Wilson, ii, p 115 [5] Wilson, ii, p 59
[6] Ibid, p 188, also compare Malcolm, ii, pp 122–3
[7] Wilson, ii, p 67 [8] Bhattacharya, pp 50–1 [9] Baines, p 28

industrialists, and even labourers [1] It seems that in the days of Akbar, too, the Brahmins were engaged in trade, cultivation, or any advantageous pursuit in general [2]

More castes than one are engaged in agriculture, as for example, the Vellalas, the Reddys, and the Naickers in Southern India [3] As regards the five artisan castes, grouped together as Panchakalsi, it is observed that it is not impossible for individuals to pass from one occupation to another without any alteration of social status or loss of right of intermarriage [4] Weaving is practised by many of the menial castes including even the impure castes of Mahars and Chamars If one looks at the Census Reports, especially those for 1901, one finds groups, which are regarded as separate castes, following more callings than one The following remark of Russell is very instructive from this point of view He observes "Several castes have the same traditional occupation, about forty of the castes of the Central Provinces are classified as agriculturists, eleven as weavers, seven as fishermen, and so on" [5] In 1798 Colebrooke wrote "Daily observation shows even Brahmins exercising the menial profession of a Śūdra We are aware that every caste forms itself into clubs or lodges, consisting of the several individuals of that caste residing within a small distance, and that these clubs or lodges govern themselves by particular rules or customs or by-laws But though some restrictions and limitations, not founded on religious prejudices, are found among their by-laws, it may be received as a general maxim that the occupation appointed for each tribe is entitled to a preference Every profession, with few exceptions, is open to every description of persons" [6] When Irving says,[7] "If we except the priesthood, caste has not necessarily any effect on the line of life in which a man embarks," he certainly overstates the position, and the following observation of Baines strikes the true note "The occupation, again, which is common to the latter (the caste), is a traditional one, and is not by any means necessarily

[1] *Madras Census*, 1871, p 183
[2] Bose, ii, p 27, quotation from *Ain i Akbari*
[3] Pandian, p 81, for Central India, see Malcolm, ii, p 169
[4] Baines, p 59 [5] Russell, i, p 9
[6] Quoted in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th Edition), vol v, p 465 (*a*)
[7] p 19

that by which all, or even most, of the group make their living in the present day "[1]

(6) *Restrictions on Marriage*.—Most of the groups, whose features we have attempted to characterize above, are further divided into a number of sub-groups, every one of which forbids its members to marry persons from outside it. Each of these groups, popularly known as sub castes, is thus endogamous. This principle of strict endogamy is such a dominant aspect of caste-society that an eminent sociologist is led to regard endogamy as "the essence of the caste system."[2] There are, however, a few exceptions to this general rule of marrying within one's own group which are due to the practice of hypergamy. In some parts of the Punjab, especially in the hills, a man of a higher caste can take to wife a girl from one of the lower castes, while, in Malabar, the younger sons of the Nambudiri and other Brahmins consort with the Kshatriya and Nayar women, among whom mother-right prevails. Excepting for these cases of inter-caste hypergamy each group has to contract matrimonial alliances within its own limits. Outside of this practice the only other authentic case where inter-caste marriage is allowed is that of some of the artisan castes of Malabar.[3] Any man venturing to transgress this law will be put out of his own sub-caste and it is doubtful if he would be admitted into the folds of any other respectable caste. To illustrate from the Maratha region, a Konkanasth Brahmin must marry a girl born in a Konkanastha Brahmin family, while a Karhada Brahmin must similarly seek his partner from amongst the Karhada Brahmins and so on, the principle being that marriage must be arranged within the group which is most effectively considered to be one's own. If this rule is violated expulsion from the membership of the group is generally the penalty which the offending parties have to suffer. In Gujarat the unit within which all matrimonial alliances must be contracted is very often still smaller than the so-called sub caste of the Marathi region. Among the Banias, the trading caste, for example, there are not only the divisions of Shrimali, Porwal, Modh, etc., but there are further sub-divisions like Dasa Porwal and Visa Porwal.[4] This is not all

[1] *Ethnography*, p. 11. [2] Westermarck, ii, p. 59. [3] Baines, p. 59.
[4] Compare Malcolm, ii, p. 162.

The Dasas are still further required to contract their marriages either from amongst the Dasas of Surat or of Bombay according as they belong to Surat or Bombay When the groups are so much sub-divided the penalty for transgressing the rule of endogamy in reference to the smallest unit is not expulsion of the offending parties but the gratification by them of the offended groups

To regard endogamy as the chief characteristic of a caste is to treat all so-called sub-castes as the real castes Gait [1] advances two reasons against this procedure of raising sub-castes to the position of castes, viz it would be "contrary to the native feeling on the subject", and would be "highly inconvenient in practice, as it would create a bewildering multiplicity of castes" As for the second objection, we may safely pass it over, as it concerns only an administrative difficulty As regards the Indian sentiment against making a sub-caste into a caste, it must be pointed out that, at best, this is the representation of only one side of the problem, for if, to confine ourselves to the Maratha country, a Saraswat Brahmin is known to the outsiders as a Saraswat, to a Saraswat he is better known either as a Shenvi or as a Sashtikar or Pednekar Stated generally, though it is the caste that is recognized by the society at large it is the sub-caste that is regarded by the particular caste and the individual It is mainly indifference towards others, so characteristic of the Indian system, that is responsible for this attitude For a Brahmin most others are Śūdras, irrespective of high or low status, and for two or three higher castes that are allied to the Brahmins in culture, the rest of the population, excepting the impure castes and some other specific groups, is Kulwadi or Śūdra—a generic term for manual workers The higher castes are grouped together as either Ashrafin in Bihar,[2] Bhadralok in Bengal, or Pandhar-peshe in Maharashtra Further, if we are to take some kind of Indian sentiment as our guide in our analysis, then, as according to the orthodox theory on this matter there are only two or at the most three castes, in the present age, we shall have to divide the whole population of any major linguistic province into two castes, Brahmin and

[1] *Ency of R & E*, vol iii, p 234
[2] Martin, i, p 110

Śūdra, or at the most three, where the existence of the Kshatriya is grudgingly granted Evidently no scientific student of caste, not even Gait himself, has proposed to follow Indian opinion on this matter There is ample reason why, to get a sociologically correct idea of the institution, we should recognize sub-castes as real castes

Of the features of a caste society dealt with so far three pertain to the caste as a whole, for the status in the hierarchy of any sub-caste depends upon the status of the caste, from which follow the various civil and religious rights and disabilities, and the traditional occupation is determined by the nature of the caste The other three features, which are very material in the consideration of a group from the point of view of an effective social life, viz those that regulate communal life and prescribe rules as regards feeding, social intercourse and endogamy, belong to the sub-caste In the matter of the Panchayat or the caste-council, which is the tribunal for enforcing the moral and economic rules of the group, the sub-caste generally possesses its own council In the Punjab this is the case in all castes, except the artisans and menials "Where the sub-divisions are not very clearly defined, or where the numerical strength of the whole caste is small, there is one governing body for the whole caste"[1] The following description of the sub caste in Bengal clearly brings out the function we have mentioned as peculiar to it "Almost every caste is divided into a number of smaller groups which will only marry amongst themselves Usually these groups will not eat together and often they will not even take water from each other or smoke from the same 'hukka' These endogamous groups are generally known as sub-castes Each sub-caste manages its own affairs quite independently of the others, and in the case of the lower castes each has its own separate Panchayat or standing committee, by which all social questions are decided"[2] In the United Provinces it is the sub-caste that forms the unit of social organization, and as such has its own council to look after its affairs quite independently of the similar councils of the other sub-castes[3] Further, inter-dining and inter-drinking are restricted to the group which

[1] *Punjab Census*, 1911, p 417 [2] *Bengal Census*, 1901, p 351
[3] *U P Census*, 1911, p 338

is endogamous[1] About the Central Provinces Russell observes[2] "The real unit of the system and the basis of the fabric of Indian society is this endogamous group or sub-caste" Though this group is usually little known outside the man's own caste, yet it is the members of the sub caste that attend "the communal feasts held on the occasions of marriages, funerals and meetings of the caste [sub-caste] Panchayat" The remark of the Census Operator for Madras that it is the small endogamous sub-divisions "which are for all social purposes the real castes"[3] is corroborated by F J Richards in the case of Salem District when he observes "The Unit of Hindu society is the endogamous group or sub-caste"[4] The description of the sub-caste of a Hindustani caste given by Sherring will illustrate this He observes about the Barhai or carpenter caste of Hindustan that its seven sub-castes "are so distinct from one another that they hold no direct social intercourse with each other, either by marriages, or by eating or smoking together"[5] Further, some of the sub-castes have such a distinctness about their cultural items, as for example among the Vellalas, that it is not possible to give a general account of the marriage and other customs applicable to all the sub divisions While some of them recognize freedom of divorce and re-marriage and even polyandry, others follow strictly the Brahmanic rules[6] The remark of Gait that "as a rule the prohibition of intermarriage between members of the different sub castes is far less rigid than it is between members of different castes, and when the rule is broken, the penalty is usually not expulsion, but merely some form of atonement, after which the member of the higher of the two sub-castes concerned, and possibly his or her parents, take rank in the lower",[7] may be urged as a potent reason why sub-castes should be treated as strictly subordinate to a caste Here it

[1] Ibid, p 353
[2] Op cit, vol i, p 10
[3] *Madras Census*, 1901, p 128, also compare Kerr, p 279 "You may sometimes hear a native say that he is a Brahmin But not unfrequently when you ask him to name his caste, he mentions the minor sub-division, or perhaps the trade or profession, to which he belongs"
[4] *Salem Dist Gazetteer*, pp 123–4
[5] Rev M A Sherring, *Hindu Tribes and Castes*, vol i, 1872, p xxii
[6] *Madras Census*, 1891, p 234
[7] Gait, op cit, p 232

must be pointed out that in the United Provinces at least "the penalty for breaches of sub-caste endogamy appears to be as severe as the penalty for similar breaches of caste-endogamy", and that, though the penalty for the transgression of rules about sub-caste commensality varies in different castes, it seems that generally caste and sub caste commensality are much on a par in this respect[1] Hence it is but proper to treat endogamy within each of the groups constituting caste-society as one of its principal features

So far we have treated of the distinctions between groups in the caste-society, which were held together in a chain by the fact that they were arranged in a system, the apex of which was formed by the group designated Brahmin Each of these groups, major as well as minor, generally known as castes and sub-castes, has a name When any group of the same name happens to have a wide distribution, language delimits effective social intercourse, which obtains only amongst members of the same group speaking the same language Whatever might have been the situation in the past, when the jurisdictional factor, as Jackson terms it,[2] was a force affecting such social intercourse, in the beginning of the nineteenth century linguistic boundaries fixed the caste-limits In any linguistic area there were from fifty to two hundred of these major groups divided into five hundred to two thousand minor groups An individual's circle of community-feeling was any of these minor groups, in which he or she was born, but as far as civic life was concerned it was the major group that decided the status of an individual

Of the major groups about half a dozen in each linguistic region were formed by primitive tribes, which were slowly absorbing whatever ideas they could from the Brahmanic civilization They were hardly citizens They lived not as members of towns or villages but of hamlets of their own, and were shunned by the Brahmanized peoples Apart from their desire to imitate Brahmanic ideals as interpreted by other castes, their bond of social solidarity with other groups was the economic gain that resulted from an exchange of their economic activities with them More or less similarly

[1] *U P Census*, 1911, p 354 Gait's observation may apply only to Gujarat
[2] *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1907

circumstanced were the nomadic castes, another half a dozen or a dozen About five to fifteen groups, mostly artisans and special traders, were peculiar to the towns, where social coherence was the result of common government rather than that of the co-operation of the groups The remaining castes were distributed among the villages, every village having about fifteen to thirty of them And it was in the village that caste-society manifested its other aspect, viz co operation and inter-dependence Village society was characterized by the possession of a number of permanent officials and menials, belonging to different castes, each having a definite status in the economic and civic life of the village In India south of the Vindhyas the system was very highly developed, and the number of such dignitaries varied from twelve to twenty-four belonging to as many different castes These persons, irrespective of their caste-status, had not only a voice in civic affairs but were also sometimes consulted in purely social and legal matters affecting the private lives of the individuals of any caste, resident in the village In Northern India the system of village servants, though not so highly evolved as in the south, yet served the purpose of harmonizing different groups, till the super-imposition of a dominant caste had lessened the importance of the village dignitaries that were there These latter, because of the particular form of land-tenure and revenue system and of their almost servile tenure, had no status in civic affairs, much less were they consulted in the private affairs of the members of the dominant caste [1] In its pristine glory, however, a village or a town had a council of elders chosen from all castes and representing all the avocations in the locality

The whole village had to deal with the government of the locality in revenue matters This had engendered a splendid sense of solidarity among the members of the village community who were dearly attached to their lands The stability, co operative spirit, and sense of solidarity seen in the village communities evoked the following remarks from Sir Charles Metcalfe, who fervently pleaded against the introduction of the system of collecting revenue directly

[1] Baden Powell, p 26 , Altekar, p 122 The latter's view, in our opinion, requires a little modification as in the text

from individual proprietors He observes "The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations They seem to last within themselves where nothing else lasts Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down, revolution succeeds revolution, Hindoo, Pathan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sik, English, are all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves an hostile army passes through the country the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked If a country remain for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return The sons will take the places of their fathers, the same site for the village, the same position for the houses, the same lands will be reoccupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated, and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success all acting in union with a common interest as regards the Government, and adjusting their own separate interests among themselves according to established usage" [1]

The decisions of the village councils that have come down to us from the Maratha country, bear the signatures of almost all the village servants, including the untouchable Mahar and Mang [2] An entry in the Private Diary of Anandaranga Pillay of the middle of the eighteenth century refers to a village-meeting called to consider a case of temple-desecration "in which people of all castes—from the Brahmin to the Pariah—took part" [3] Dr Matthai quotes the description of a meeting of a village Panchayat in which both the Brahmins and the Śūdras took part The Brahmin schoolmaster of the place was the accused, he having inflicted

[1] *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company*, vol iii (Revenue), 1832, pp 331–2 (Appendix 84)
[2] Altekar, p 43 [3] Ibid, pp 35–6

exceptionally severe punishment on one of the boys under his charge. The Brahmin members sat on a higher platform and the Śūdras on a lower veranda, both the sections indulging freely in betel and tobacco-snuff.[1] In the diaries of the Peshwas of Poona and the Raja of Satara there are a few references to meetings of the whole village community, assembled to adjudicate quarrels between Brahmins or to offer authoritative advice in their domestic matters. A Brahmin Kulkarni had one son who had married two wives, one of whom had borne him only two daughters. On the sudden death of the son, his senior wife resolved to immolate herself. The whole village, including all the village dignitaries, was called in conference. In view of the old man's helpless condition the assembly proposed that the lady should adopt a son before burning herself. This decision was agreed to by the old man and his daughter-in-law. The whole assemblage further, in consultation with the persons concerned, selected the person to be adopted and made a request for him to his guardian.[2] A quarrel between Brahmin cousins in respect of some hereditary rights was referred for settlement to the whole village. The assembly that was to give the decision included Marathas, Dhangars, Gurav, Sutar, Lohar, potter, Koli, barber, Chambhar, Mahar, and Mang.[3]

Ideas of status were quietly accepted and did not prevent healthy co-operation and neighbourly feeling among the various caste-groups represented in the vigorous village communities of Southern India. In the case of Northern India we must remember that though, perhaps, village life did not lead to as much co-operation and fellow-feeling, the system of castes was marked by a more lenient view and practice about food and social intercourse. The various castes, in so far as they contributed their respective services towards the common life of the village, were welded together and interdependent for the purposes of civic life. Interdependence of castes was such a deeply-rooted principle that it prevented other exclusive aspects, inherent in the system, from getting the better of the idea of a common civic goal and human sympathy for co-residents and hardening into caste-spirit or caste-patriotism. If interdependence

[1] Matthai, p. 20.
[2] Vad, *Madhavrao* I, vol. II, pp. 339, 341.
[3] Vad, *Shahu Chhatrapati*, pp. 174, 176.

in civic and economic life of the village counteracted the centripetal forces of social restrictions of caste, certain special functions and occasions reminded some castes, ordinarily considered to be low, of their importance and even afforded them opportunities of enjoying temporary superiority

In parts of the United Provinces the barber often acts as a match-maker and is present at weddings The Dom at the burning "ghat" in Benares is an important personage "Some years ago the head of the caste used to be conveyed to the funeral of a wealthy client in his own palanquin" The first five logs of wood for arranging the pyre must be given by a Dom, who has also to lay the foundation of the pyre and to hand a wisp of burning straw to the chief mourner for lighting the wood [1] In the Central Provinces, as a part of the marriage ceremony, the bridegroom's party takes the bride to the house of the Kumbhar (potter) for making the marriage propitious The wife of the potter presents her with seven new pots which are to be used at the wedding In return for this veiled blessing the woman gets a present of clothes [2] Both the barber and washerman are prominent in a Kunbi wedding At a particular stage in the ceremony the barber and washerman take the bride and bridegroom on their shoulders and dance in the marriage-booth, for which services they receive presents [3] In Berar "at the Holi festival the fire of the Mahars is kindled first and that of the Kunbis is set alight from it" Some Telis (oil-pressers), Lohars (blacksmiths), Kunbis and other castes employ a Mahar (one of the untouchables) to fix the date of their weddings The Mahar also officiates at the slaughter of a buffalo at the Dasahra festival [4] The barber acts as the Brahmin's assistant at marriage, and to the lower castes he is even the matrimonial priest [5] The officiating priest at the famous temple of Jagannath is a barber, food cooked for the deity by him being acceptable to all but the most orthodox amongst Brahmins For some of the Vellalas (Tamil cultivators) he even acts as the marriage-priest [6] "Some of the most celebrated and exclusive temples are

[1] Crooke (2), pp 102–29
[2] Russell, iv, pp 6, 10
[3] Ibid, p 20
[4] Ibid, pp 18, 131
[5] Ibid, p 265
[6] Thurston, i, pp 32–4

thrown open to the Paraiyan (the Tamil unapproachable) on certain days of the year, and for the time he lords it over the Brahmin" At some festivals at the temples of Siva or the local goddess he sits by the side of the idol in the procession or ties the badge of marriage round its neck "When there is a dispute about a boundary, it is a Paraiyan, or in other parts of India, a member of the corresponding caste, who has to walk the line with a pot of water, his own son, or a clod of his native earth, on his head"[1] These and other occasions, on which some of the groups, which were considered to be low castes, could feel their importance, relieved the monotonous depression of these groups, and gave zest to their life even in their degraded condition

To sum up, in each linguistic area there were about two hundred groups called castes with distinct names, usually birth in one of which determined the status in society of a given individual, which were divided into about two thousand smaller units—generally known as sub-castes—fixing the limits of marriage and effective social life and making for specific cultural tradition These major groups were held together by the possession, with few exceptions, of a common priesthood Over a large part of the country they were welded together for civil life in the economy and civics of village communities Common service to the civic life, prescriptive rights of monopolist service, and specific occasions for enjoying superiority for some of the castes, considered very low, made the village community more or less a harmonious civic unit Complete acceptance of the system in its broad outlines by the groups making up that system and their social and economic interdependence in the village not only prevented the exclusivist organization of the groups from splitting up the system into independent units, but created a harmony in civic life Of course, this harmony was not the harmony of parts that are equally valued, but of units which are rigorously subordinated to one another

[1] Baines, pp 75–6

Note—In this chapter we have quoted many authorities that are chronologically later, by half a century or more, than the period we have here in view But other and older authorities are almost everywhere indicated The reason is that the later authorities give more details and are easily accessible to most people

CHAPTER II

NATURE OF CASTE GROUPS

WE have seen that in the Hindu caste-society there are a number of groups with distinct names The nature of these names is likely to furnish us with a clue to some understanding of the process by which distinction between groups came to be formulated Of the major groups called castes many bear names derived from the principal professions they followed or the crafts they practised and, in the majority of cases, are still engaged in Brahmin means one who recites the prayer, the ritual formulæ or incantations, and designates a group that was once wholly composed of individuals so engaged, though now it is the appellation of a group whose members are engaged not only in the priestly function, but also in the allied functions of clerks and writers, and even in pursuits absolutely foreign to the original ideals of a Brahmin

Of the groups carrying on trade and commerce a large number bear the name of Vani or Baniya, which is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning a trader The Tamil Chetti seems also to refer to the avocation of the group in that linguistic area Jat of the Punjab means cultivator, so also do Vellala of the Tamil and Vakkaliga of the Canarese country Kurmi, Kunbi, and Kanbi perhaps signify the occupation of the group, viz that of cultivation, though it is not improbable that the name may be of tribal origin Kisan, the name of a cultivating caste of northern India, must be derived from the Sanskrit word for cultivation Sometimes the connection of agriculture is brought out indirectly as in the name of the Lodha of the Central Provinces The name is believed to mean " clod-hopper " from " loh ", a clod [1] The cattle-breeding group takes the significant name of Gauli, derived from a Sanskrit word for cow Soni or Sonar, the name of the goldsmith caste, refers to the material in which the group specializes Barhai,

[1] Russell, iv, p 113

Taikhan, Tachchan and Sutar, the designations of the carpenter-caste in the different linguistic regions, point to the material worked on, the mode of working or the special implement of the craft The names of the metal-working castes—Lohar, Tambat, Kasar, and Thathera—come from the metal handled by these groups, viz iron, copper, bell metal, and brass Bunkar, Joria, Tanti, Koshti, Patva, Pattanulkaran, and Sale are the designations of the various weaving castes The first two are derived from a root meaning, to put the threads together,[1] and the others from Sanskrit words for silk-cloth [2] Kumhar or Kumbhar, the name of the potter caste, means one who makes pots Tili or Teli, the oil-presser, means either one who presses oil or one who handles sesamum The names of the barber-caste are either derived from the Sanskrit word for barber or signify those who cut the hair Lunia and Agri mean salt-workers Bari, the leaf-plate-making caste, derives its name from "bar", a "plantation", and Tamboli, dealers in betel-leaf, from the Sanskrit word for betel-leaf Dharkar means rope maker and Bansphor, the basket-maker, means the bamboo-splitter Chamar or Chambhar, the name of the leather working caste, is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning, worker in leather Kahar, name of a North-Indian caste, formerly engaged chiefly as water-carriers but now as general and domestic servants, means a water carrier Pasi means a trapper or snarer, and is significantly the name of an aboriginal caste living by catching wild birds and small game The names of the shepherd castes seem to be derived from words meaning sheep Such is at least the case with Gadaria from "gadar", an old Hindi word for sheep [3]

Many others of these major groups called castes bear merely tribal or ethnic names Such are for example Arora, Gujar, Lohana, Bhatia, Mina, Bhil, Dom, Oraon, Munda, Santal, Koch, Ahir, Mahar, Nayar, Maratha, Gond, Khond, etc

Religious movements have not failed to give their names to groups, which are now castes The Bishnois and Sadhs, the Jogis, the Gosains, and the Manbhaos are some of the

[1] Nesfield, p 21 [2] Russell, iii, p 581, and iv, p 386
[3] Nesfield, p 11

examples of sectarian castes The first four of these began as orders emphasizing certain aspects of Hindu tenets, while the last group was the result of a reformist movement in the Maratha region

A few of the groups have names emphasizing a peculiarity which is somehow regarded as specific, or are of the nature of nicknames Musahar, meaning mouse-eaters, is the name of a low aboriginal caste of the United Provinces Bhangi, one who performs the useful function of removing night-soil, is a term probably applied to the caste simply as a token of contempt—those who are broken or outcast [1] Bhulia, an Uriya caste of weavers, are so called merely because they are supposed to be a forgetful people—from "bhulna", "to forget" [2] Dangi, the name of a cultivating caste of the Central Provinces, means merely a hillman, perhaps referring to the former marauding activities of the now peaceful and once dominant people [3] The Panka of the Central Provinces are a caste of weavers and general labourers, but their name is believed to be derived from a certain incident in their conversion to the creed of Kabir and means those who are "from water", "pani ka" [4] Dubla, one of the aboriginal tribes of Gujarat, are so called because they are weaklings [5] "dubla" means weak Naikdas of Gujarat are perhaps so designated in contempt, the term meaning "little Naik" Ramoshi, a thieving caste of the Deccan, is supposed to be a short form of Rama-Vanshi, i e descendant of Rama, the epic hero [6] Kallan, the name of a Madras caste, means in Tamil a "thief" Tiyan, the toddy-tapping caste of Malabar, means a "southerner", as the Tiyans are believed to have migrated from Ceylon Pariah, the name of the great untouchable caste of Madras, is derived from a word for drum, which instrument is played by them

A small number of these major groups are definitely known to be the outcome of miscegenation Some of the members of the higher castes of Orissa and the Kayasth immigrants into Orissa keep maids of Bhandari and other clean castes and treat them as their concubines The issue of such unions

[1] Enthoven, i, p 105
[2] Russell, ii, p 320
[3] Russell, ii, pp 457-8
[4] Russell, iv, p 324
[5] Enthoven, i, p 341
[6] Enthoven, iii, p 297

is known by the name of Shagirdapesha[1] The Bhilalas are well known to be the offspring of Rajput males and Bhil women[2] Vidur, a Maratha caste of the Central Provinces, is wholly formed by individuals of mixed descent[3]

A close study of the names of the various minor units, the so called sub-castes, within the major groups reveals the fact that the bases of distinction leading to the exclusive marking off of these groups were First, territorial or jurisdictional separateness, second, mixed origin, third, occupational distinction, fourth, some peculiarity in the technique of one and the same occupation, fifth, sectarian difference, sixth, dissimilarity of customs, and last, adventitious circumstances, suggesting certain nicknames

Sub-castes that bear the name of some ancient city or locality, are to be met with in the majority of the castes The Ahirs of the Central Provinces have among their sub-castes, the following groups Jijhotia, taking their name from Jajhoti, the classical designation of Bundelkhand, Narwaria from Narwar, Kosaria from Kosala, the ancient name of Chhattisgarh, and Kanaujia from Kanauj[4] The Barai have the following endogamous sub-divisions Chaurasia, from the Chaurasi pargana of Mirzapur District, Panagaria from Panagar in Jubbulpore, Mahobia from Mahoba, Jaiswar, from the town of Jais in Rai Bareli District, Gangapari, coming from the other side of the Ganges[5] The Brahmins of Bengal have among their sub castes the following names Paschatya, from the western part of India, Radhiya, from Radh, the old name of Western Bengal, Barendra, from the northern part of Bengal[6] The names of the sub-castes of the Brahmin caste of the United Provinces are most of them territorial in origin Kanaujia from Kanauj, Maithil from Mithila, Jijhotia from Jajhoti, Saraswat, named after the River Saraswati, and Gaur from an old name of a large part of Northern India Most of the sub-castes of the Brahmins of the Maratha country bear names of localities Konkanasth from the Konkan, Deshasth from the Desh, the Deccan plateau The Saraswat Brahmins have more than six sub-castes, all territorial in origin Of

[1] Risley, (2), p 83
[2] Enthoven, i, p 153
[3] Russell, iv, p 596
[4] Russell, ii, pp 24–5
[5] Ibid, p 193
[6] Bhattacharya, p. 85

the numerous sub-castes of the Gujarat Brahmins the majority bear territorial names, like Agarwal, from Agra, Deshaval, Harsola, Jharola, Modh, Nagar, Osval, Porval, Shrimali, Sorathia, all of them being derived from old names of localities once independent in their jurisdiction [1] Many of the sub divisions of the Smarta Brahmins of the Telugu country bear names derived from the old names of the various parts of that country Velnad, Vengi Nadu, Kasal Nadu, Mulki Nadu, and Telaga Nadu The sub-caste of the Kanara Kamma Vaidika is formed by Brahmins who originally came from the Kanarese country but are now naturalized in the Telugu country [2] Following are some of the other castes among which the sub-castes bear territorial names Vania, Mochi, Kansara, Sutar, Charan, Kumbhar, Dhed, Darji, Lohar, and Koli among Gujarat castes, Kayasth, Bania, and Vaidya, among the North Indian castes, Chambhar, Gaoli, Koli, Kumbhar, Kunbi, Lohar, Mahar, Mali, Nhavi, Sutar, and Vani among the Maratha castes

Many castes have divisions bearing names reminiscent of the ethnic origins of these sub-groups Many tribes, either because some of their members followed a particular occupation or because some of them intermarried with the members of a particular caste-in-formation, have contributed their names to sub-castes The professions and castes, which allowed or tolerated the infusion of tribal people, still distinguished the groups formed by such inclusion or mesalliance This is how many of the occupational castes have come to possess sub-castes bearing tribal names This process of infusion and left-handed marriage does not seem to have been restricted to tribes alone In spite of the so called rigidity of caste, it appears that many of the occupational and tribal castes, either permitted or connived at the intrusion of members of other castes Only they tried to keep the progeny and the group formed by them distinct from their original group Thus the sub-castes of some of the major castes have composite names derived from the names of other castes The Barai, a caste of betel-vine growers in

[1] Enthoven, i, p 221 Some of the Gujarat castes are further sub divided according to the cities in which they reside, e g, Shrimali Baniyas of Surat and those of Ahmedabad etc

[2] Bhattacharya, p 99

the Central Provinces, have a sub-division called the Kumbhardhang, who are supposed to be the descendants of a potter The Basor, workers in bamboo, have the following sub-castes Dumar or Dom-Basors, Basors who are derived from the Dom-tribe, Dhubela, perhaps from the Dhobi caste, Dharkar, which is the name also of a large caste of rope-makers in Northern India The Chambhar, leather workers of the Maratha country, have Ahir as one of their sub castes The Chamar of the Central Provinces has a sub-caste named Korchamars who "are said to be the descendants of alliances between Chamars and Koris or weavers"[1] The Sali, a weaving caste of Maratha districts, has Ahir, Maratha, and Chambhar sub-castes, which announce their origins from the different ethnic and occupational groups The Dhimar, a caste of fishermen and palanquin-bearers of the Central Provinces, retain in the name of one of their sub-castes its traditional origin from the Gonds Among the Dheds, as among many castes of Gujarat, is a sub-caste named Gujar, derived from a mediaeval tribe of that name Among the Gaulis, cowherds of the Maratha country, are to be found sub-castes bearing the name of Ahir, Kunbi, Kuruba, and Maratha Gondhali, a composite caste of religious minstrels, has sub castes bearing the names of other well-known castes of the Maratha country, like the Brahman, Dhangar, and Kumbhar The Kolis of the Deccan have Agri, Ahir, and Bhil among their sub-castes Nesfield has found among some castes of the United Provinces sub-castes styled after the Kol tribe, which seem to have taken to various occupations during the formative period of the caste-system[2] Among the Kunbis of Nagpur is a sub-caste bearing the name Manwa derived from the Manas, who were once a dominant people in Chanda district The Khandesh Kunbis have, as one of their sub-castes, Kumbhar, which is the name of the potter-caste "Bodies of the Kori and Katia weaving castes of Northern India have been amalgamated with the Mahars in Districts where they have come together along the Satpura Hills and Nerbudda Valley," the latter caste still having Katia as one of its sub-castes[3] Kunbi is one of the sub-castes of the Nhavis,

[1] Nesfield, p 106 [2] Nesfield, p 106 [3] Russell, iv, p 133

the Maratha caste of barbers The Pardhans of the Central Provinces have a sub-caste called Ganda, supposed to be the offspring of intermarriages between the two castes[1] Among the Shimpis or Maratha tailors, one finds Ahir and Maratha as two of their sub castes, derived from well known castes "The Teli Kalars appear to be a mixed group of Kalars who have taken to the oilman's profession, and the Teli-Banias are Telis who have become shopkeepers[2]

The nature of many of the occupations is such that though from a broad point of view each one may be regarded as distinct, yet on closer scrutiny it presents differences which are sufficient to distinguish one aspect of it from another Thus though leather working may be regarded as one occupation by the society, the followers of that occupation may distinguish different branches of leather-working as shoe making, sandal making, or oilcan making Such detailed distinctions within an occupation have been thought to be adequate to designate the group of members following the particular branch of the occupation by the name of that branch Sub-castes within many of the occupational castes bear names derived from the special branches of the occupations Among the Chamars of the Central Provinces there are many sub-castes whose names are derived from the particular articles of leather that their members are engaged in making The members of the sub-caste Budalgir prepare "budlas" or oilcans of leather Jingars are saddle-makers The Katwa sub-caste specializes in leather-cutting The Dhimar caste of the Central Provinces has Bansia and Bandhaiya as two of their sub-castes The former term is derived from "bansi", a bamboo fishing-rod, and the latter means those who make ropes and sacking of hemp and fibre The Kunbis have a sub-caste called Tilole presumably because once they cultivated the sesamum (til) plant Among the Lonaris of Belgaum there are two sub-divisions styled after their particular article which they prepare as Mith (salt) and Chune (lime) Phul Mali, Kacha Mali, Jire Mali, and Halde Mali, together forming the bulk of the Mali caste, are sub-castes which take their names from occupational specialization Thus the Phul Mali is a florist, the Kacha

[1] Russell, iv, p 354 [2] Ibid, p 546

Mali prepare the cotton braid, the Jire grow cumin seed (jire), and the Halde grow "halad" or turmeric The Koshtis of the Central Provinces have Patwi and Sutsale as two of their sub-castes Patwis make the braid of silk thread and sew silk thread on ornaments Sutsales weave mostly cotton-thread

Many sub castes, especially among the castes that are either of the nature of ethnic groups or carry on secondary undefined occupations, are named from the nature of their special economic activities Singaria, Tankiwala, Dhuria, Sonjhara, and Kasdhonia are some of the sub divisions of the Dhimar caste in the Central Provinces Singarias cultivate "singara" or water-nut Tankiwalas are sharpeners of grindstones Dhurias sell parched rice Sonjhara wash for gold, and Kasdhonias wash the sands of sacred rivers to pick coins dropped in them by devout pilgrims The Garpagari Jogi derives the name of his sub-caste from his occupation of using magic to avert hailstorms The Manihari Jogis are pedlars selling beads, and the Ritha Biknath are so called because they sell "ritha" or soap nut Khaire, Dhanoje, and Lonhare are three of the sub-castes of the Kunbis of the Central Provinces Khaires presumably used to make catechu from "khair", Dhanoje are those who tend small stock or "dhan", and Lonhare formerly refined salt The Lonaria sub-caste of the Mahars of the Central Provinces is engaged in salt-making The Dhangars have Mendhes and Mhaskes as two of their sub-divisions, named because they keep sheep (mendhis) and buffaloes (mhashi) respectively

The Mang-garudis, a sub-division of the Mang-caste, are so called because they are snake-charmers, the Tokar-phodes take their name from their occupation of splitting (phod) bamboo (tokar), the Nades are so called because they make "nadas" or ropes The Mangmochis are leather-workers Kakars make ropes of untanned hide[1] Nhavis, the barbers of the Maratha country, have among their sub-castes Vajantri and Mashalji The former are so called because they play music and the latter because they carry torches (mashal) before processions Among Mahars of the Maratha country two of their sub-divisions are named Panya

[1] Enthoven, ii, p 436

and Bele, the former from their working with leaves for making umbrellas and the latter from their making mats from chips of bamboo In the Central Provinces the Yerande Telis, who are a sub-caste of the Teli caste, take their name from the fact that formerly they pressed only "erandi" or castor oil seed The Sao Telis have given up oil-pressing and are now cultivators [1]

Peculiarities connected with the apparatus or technique of an occupation have given their names to the sub-divisions of some of the occupational castes The Kumbhar, potters of the Maratha country, distinguish those who make pots by hand without the wheel as Hatghades (hand potters), those who use a big wheel as Thorchake ("thor" big, and "chak", wheel), and those who use a small wheel as Lahanchake ("lahan" small) In the Central Provinces the potter caste has the first sub-caste, but not the last two Instead they have Chakere and Kurere, the latter using a revolving stone slab instead of a wheel In addition they have a sub-caste called Goria because the members of their sub-division make white pots only and not black ones In the Nagpur district the Telis have two principal sub-divisions Ekbaile are those who yoke only one bullock to their press while Dobaile yoke two bullocks

Differences of religious schools or sects have given names to sub-divisions among some castes The old distinctions on the basis of the Veda, which was traditionally followed by the members of a group, have persisted among the Deshasth Brahmins of the Maratha country leading to endogamous restrictions Among them the Rigvedis and Yajurvedis—the followers of the Rig-veda and of the Yajur-veda—are so far distinct as to be sub-castes Later creeds and reformatory movements have also left their marks on caste organization Among the Deshasth Brahmins there is also an endogamous group, whose members are supposed to be the descendants of Eknath, a reforming saint of Maharashtra [2] The South Indian Brahmins carry their religious differences to such an extent that generally the

[1] Russell, iv, p 546 Enthoven iii, 327

N B —It is a curious fact that among the Gujarat Baniyas their religious differences have not led to rigorous interdicting of intermarriage There is no serious objection to marriages between Jain and Vaishnav Baniyas Compare Malcolm, ii, p 162

Smartas and Vaishnavas are regarded as sub-castes The Chamars of the Central Provinces have amongst them a large sub-caste named Satnami because the members are followers of the Satnami sect The Padam Salis have Hindu and Lingayat divisions which are endogamous So also have the Gavlis, the Kumbhars and Malis, Lingayat divisions among them The Pankas, a Dravidian caste of weavers, have Kabirha and Saktaha as their principal sub castes The Kabirhas are the followers of the sect of Kabir and the Saktahas profess to belong to the Śākta creed [1]

Differences in customs and diet have been regarded as so important that some of the castes recognize groups with such differences as sub-castes, though the names of these do not necessarily take after the differences The Berads of Bombay have two sub-castes, the difference between them being that the members of one eat the flesh of buffaloes, bullocks or pigs, and allow their women to follow prostitution, while the members of the other do not tolerate these practices These latter are termed Bile, i e white or pure, and the former Kare or black Dhor, one of the five sub-divisions of the Katkaris, is so called because the members eat beef Moger, a Canarese fishing-caste, has three sub divisions named according to their rules of inheritance Aliyasantanas, Makalasantanas, and Randesantanas, i e those who inherit through females, those who inherit through males, and those who are the progeny of re-married widows [2] The Kunbis of the Central Provinces have a sub caste called Gadhao because they formerly kept donkeys (gadhav)

Many castes have sub-castes, whose names are derived from some real peculiarity now forgotten, or some adventitious circumstance to which importance is attached, and which is used to distinguish the members of the group, or, in the case of miscegenation, from the fact of mere illegitimacy of unions, the exact lineage not being attended to The Basors of the Central Provinces have a section called Purania or Juthia because they are supposed to be the illegitimate progeny of Ahir wet-nurses (dai), employed in Rajput households The Chungia Chamars are a branch of the

[1] Russell, iv, p 325 [2] Enthoven, iii, p 60

Satnami Chamars and are so called because, contrary to the rules of the sect, they smoke, evidently by means of a leaf-pipe (chungia) The Daijanya sub-caste of the Chamars is so called because their women act as midwives, though this business is practised by women of other sub-castes as well The Dhimars have a sub caste which is merely named Nadha or those who live on the banks of streams Their Suvarha and Gadhewale sub castes derive their names from their special association with two unclean animals, pig and ass The Mahars disclose a sense of humour by designating the group of descendants of illicit unions by the term Dharmik (pious) The Pardhans, on the contrary, apply a prosaic term to such a group among them It is known as "Thothia" or "maimed" Though "langoti" or a narrow piece of cloth is the loincloth of many poor castes, the Pardhis have hit upon its use as the distinctive mark of their members and call one of their sub-castes Langoti The Kumbhars have Gadhere, Bardia, and Sungaria as three of their sub-castes, these groups deriving their names from the animal they use or keep ass, bullock, and pig respectively The Dhangars of Bombay call their bastard brethren "kadu", while the Gujarat Kumbhars use the term Vatalia, i e polluted, to designate such members

Note —The above facts are mostly taken from the Central Provinces and Bombay Presidency, both of which regions are outside the centre of old Brahmanic culture It would have been very instructive to know how matters stand in the Tamil region which is the farthest removed from the home of the original culture and which must have received its Sanskritic culture at the hands of small batches of immigrants But unfortunately the ethnographic literature on Dravidian India does not enable us to have a glimpse of this aspect of caste In the home of the Brahmanic culture, the United Provinces, the same principles can be discerned from the nomenclature of the castes and sub castes One additional and important feature of the caste origination of that province is that the names of Rajput clans and those of some of the eponymous personages figure very largely in the names of the sub castes of many major groups (See W Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the North Western Provinces and Oudh*, vol i, pp clxiv–v)

CHAPTER III

Caste Through the Ages

WE have here sought to give a picture of Hindu caste-society as it was functioning before modern ideas affected its course. We have now to see how it came to be what it was. For the convenience of such historical treatment we propose to break up the history of India into four periods. First, the Vedic period ending about 600 B.C. and comprising the literary data of the Vedic Samhitās and the Brāhmanas; second, the post-Vedic period, extending to the beginning of the Christian era. In this period we have three types of literature which shed light on this subject. The sacred laws of the Āryas present the orthodox and the more or less idealistic standpoint while the epics testify to the contemporary practices. Buddhist literature on the other hand, gives a glimpse of the institution as it appeared to those who rebelled against it and in part provides us with a natural picture of some aspects of caste. The third period may be styled the period of the Dharma-sāstras and ends with the seventh or eighth century A.D. Manu and Vishnu are the chief exponents of the social ideals of this age. The fourth period may, with propriety, be called the modern period, and it brings us down to about the middle of the nineteenth century. The customs and beliefs of contemporary Hindus are those that were mostly fixed and classified by the writers of this period. It was during this period that the present-day vernaculars of India were being evolved. A fresh religion and a somewhat different ethnic stock, accounting for many of our present-day political and social problems, were also introduced during this age. The idealistic point of view is provided by writers like Parāsara, Hemādri, and Mādhava, while the inscriptions and travellers' accounts reveal some of the realities of the times.

It must be mentioned at the outset that all the literary accounts of the important aspects of caste centre round the four orders in society, namely Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and

Śūdra, and not the multifarious groups which are the present-day castes

In the Rigveda, the earliest literature of the first period, three classes of society are very frequently mentioned, and named Brahma, Kshatra, and Vis The first two represented broadly the two professions of the poet-priest and the warrior-chief The third division was apparently a group comprising all the common people It is only in one of the later hymns, the celebrated Purushasūkta, that a reference has been made to four orders of society as emanating from the sacrifice of the Primeval Being The names of those four orders are given there as Brāhmana, Rājanya, Vaisya, and Śūdra, and are said to have come from the mouth, the arms, the thighs, and the feet of the Creator The particular limbs ascribed as the origins of these divisions and the order in which they are mentioned probably indicate their status in the society of the time, though no such interpretation is directly given in the hymn

This origin of the four classes is repeated in most of the later works with slight variations and interpretative additions The Taittirīya Samhitā, for example, ascribes the origins of those four classes to the four limbs of the Creator and adds an explanation The Brahmins are declared to be the chief because they were created from the mouth, punning on the word "mukha" ("mouth" and "chief") The Rājanyas are vigorous because they were created from vigour The Vaisyas are meant to be eaten, referring to their liability to excessive taxation, because they were created from the stomach, the receptacle of food The Śūdra, because he was created from the feet, is to be the transporter of others and to subsist by his feet In this particular account of the creation not only is the origin of the classes interpreted theologically, but also a divine justification is sought to be given to their functions and status The creation-theory is here further amplified to account for certain other features of these social classes God is said to have created certain deities simultaneously with these classes The Vaiśya class, the commoners, must have been naturally very large, and this account explains that social fact by a reference to the simultaneous creation of Visvedevas, all and sundry deities, whose number is considerable We are told that no deities

were created along with the Śūdra and hence he is disqualified for sacrifice. Here again, the social regulation which forbade a Śūdra to offer sacrifice is explained as an incidental consequence of the creation.[1]

The fact that the four classes are described as of divine origin, although in the later hymns, must be taken as a sufficient indication that they were of long duration and very well-defined, even though the exact demarcation of their functions, the regulations guiding their inter-relations, and the extent of their flexibility may not be referred to in the main body of the Rigvedic literature, which is avowedly of a liturgical nature.

The Śatapatha Brāhmana lays down different sizes of the funeral mound for the four classes. The terms of address are also different, varying in the degree of politeness. In the "Human Sacrifice" the representatives of these orders are dedicated to different deities. A passage in the Aitareya Brāhmana warns a Kshatriya to avoid certain mistakes in the sacrificial ritual. If he commits a particular mistake, it goes on to say, "one like a Brahmin shall be born in his line who in the second or third generation from his has the power of becoming a Brahmin, and likes to live as a Brahmin." Similarly for two other mistakes he shall have a Vaisya-like and a Śūdra-like son capable of becoming a full-fledged Vaisya or Śūdra in two or three generations. It is clear, that though the classes had come to be almost stereotyped by the end of the Vedic period, it was not altogether impossible for an upward or downward change to occur in a particular family in two or three generations.[2]

These classes are regularly referred to in later literature as varnas, so much so, that popularly Hindu religion has come to be defined as Varnāsrama Dharma. Yet in the Rigveda the word "varna" is never applied to any one of these classes. It is only the Ārya varna, or the Aryan people, that is contrasted with the Dāsa varna. The Śatapatha Brāhmana, on the other hand, describes the four classes as the four varnas.[3] "Varna" means "colour", and it was in this sense that the word seems to have been employed in contrasting the Ārya and the Dāsa, referring to their fair

[1] Muir, i, p. 16. Ibid., p. 489. [3] *Vedic Index*, ii, p. 247.

and dark colours respectively. The colour-connotation of the word was so strong that later on when the classes came to be regularly described as varnas, four different colours were assigned to the four classes, by which their members were supposed to be distinguished.

On the relations subsisting between the four classes the Rigveda has very little to say. The inferences that we can draw are also few. Rigvedic literature stresses very strongly the difference between the Ārya and the Dāsa, not only in their colour but also in their speech, religious practices, and physical features. The Brahmin class, by the end of the period, appears to have acquired almost all the characteristics of a caste. Though the general body of the Rigvedic evidence is not quite determinative, yet a stray reference to a false claim for being regarded a Brahmin, like the one contained in the seventy-first hymn of the tenth book of the Rigveda, points to this conclusion. The Brahmin is definitely said to be superior to the Kshatriya, whom he is able to embroil with his incantations or with his knowledge of rituals. He is said to ensure a king's safety in battle by his prayers and the Aitareya Brāhmana lays down that a king's offerings are not acceptable to the gods unless they are offered with the help of a Purohita (chaplain), who, as we shall later on see, was generally a Brahmin. Wherever it is necessary, as in the Rājasūya sacrifice, for the Brahmin to pay homage to the king, the fact is explained in such a way as not to affect the superiority of the Brahmins. It is even suggested that the king rules by the authority delegated to him by the Brahmin.[1] The power of the king or the nobles to harass a Brahmin is recognized and as an antidote a speedy ruin is threatened. The necessity of co-operation between the Brahmin and the Kshatriya for the complete prosperity of both is often reiterated. The Brahmins are declared to be gods on earth. The Śatapatha Brāhmana even sums up the rights and duties of the Brahmins, amongst which receiving gifts and observing purity of descent are mentioned. It is also said that no Brahmin should accept whatever has been refused by others, and the sanctity attaching to the Brahmin is carried so far in the Pañchavimsa Brāhmana as to foreclose any inquiry into his claim to

[1] Compare *Śatapatha Brahmana*, v, pp 3, 4, 20

Brahmin-hood. It appears from a passage in the Śatapatha Brāhmana that property of a Brahmin was exempt from the royal claim. The remains of the sacrificial food must be eaten by nobody but a Brahmin. According to the Śatapatha Brāhmana the murder of a Brahmin is alone a real murder, while the Yajurveda declares it to be a more heinous crime than that of killing any other man. It could only be expiated by a heavy ritual. In a legal dispute between a Brahmin and a non-Brahmin an arbitrator or a witness must speak in favour of the former. Though the Śatapatha Brāhmana enumerates freedom from being killed as a privilege of the Brahmins, the Pañchavimsa Brāhmana declares that a Purohita might be punished with death for treachery to his master. According to a legend in the Śatapatha Brāhmana, the Brahmins regarded themselves as the spreaders of civilization.

The functions of a Brahmin may be said to be teaching and officiating at sacrifices, and his aim was to be pre-eminent in sacred knowledge. To achieve this, a student's life (Brahmacharya) was enjoined. To this course, it seems, only Brahmins were generally admitted. The story of Satyakāma Jābāla makes this quite clear. This youth went to a famous Brahmin teacher, requesting to be admitted as a pupil. The teacher asked him to give particulars of his lineage, whereupon Satyakāma is represented to have told the sage that he did not know the name of his father as he was born to his mother when she was overburdened with work. The teacher thereupon acclaimed him as a Brahmin because he told the truth, and allowed him to be his pupil.[1] It must be inferred from this anecdote that according to this teacher at least, only Brahmins could be admitted to Brahmacharya-studentship, because Satyakāma was accepted as a pupil only when the teacher was satisfied that the boy was a Brahmin. The test of lineage was subordinated here to the criterion of the moral characteristic of truth-speaking. Incidentally it may be pointed out that according to the ideas of the age only Brahmins could be expected to speak the truth. This inference fundamentally conflicts with the general comment on this story that it proves the possibility of a non-Brahmin being allowed to acquire the sacred lore.

[1] *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, iv, 4.

That members of other classes could be admitted to studentship as special cases must be inferred from the fact that in the Kāthaka Samhitā a rite is referred to for the benefit of a person, who had mastered the lore, though himself not a Brahmin The priest's profession was perhaps hereditary, as we read of a Brahmaputra in a few passages as the son of a Brāhmana (a priest) and also of a Brahmabandhu (a priest in name only) Nevertheless there are indications, corroborated by later tradition, that members of the Kshatriya class could also be priests The expression "Brahmapurohita", meaning "having a Brahmin priest as Purohita", suggests the possibility of a non-Brahmin priest Visvāmitra, the chaplain of Sudās and the famous rival of Vasishtha, according to the tradition, was a Kshatriya Yāska tells us that Devāpi, who officiated as priest at his brothers' sacrifice, was a prince of the Kuru family The Śatapatha Brāhmana regards a Brahmin as impure if he follows the profession of a physician

Whether marriage among the Brahmins was hemmed in by endogamous restrictions is not quite clear from the literature of this age According to tradition, Chyavana and Śyāvāsva, two Vedic sages, married Kshatriya girls On the other hand, the importance of pure descent was appreciated in so far as stress was laid on being a descendant of a Rishi In the Aitareya Brāhmana, Kavasha is taunted with being the son of a female slave and in the Pañchavimsa Brāhmana Vatsa is represented as having cleared himself of a similar charge

The second order in society, the Kshatriya, is known in the earlier portions of the Rigveda as the Rājanya The class seems to have included only the chiefs and the nobles as the word "rājanya" points to the ruling activities, and thus brings out the functional origin of the class Usually the class is represented as inferior to the Brahmin, but a solitary reference in the Kāthaka Samhitā raises the Kshatriya over the Brahmin In another text, "rājakula" or the king's family, is ranked after the Brahmin family The phrase, "claiming falsely Kshatriya's rank," occurring in the Rigveda (vii, 104, 13), raises the presumption that the Kshatriyas constituted a compact class

The occupations of the class, as we have mentioned above,

must have consisted in administrative and military duties, though the rank and file of the army might have been formed even by the commoners In the prayer for the prosperity of a Kshatriya, he is said to be an archer and good chariot-fighter That members of this class could follow other occupations is rendered probable by the mention of a Rājanya as playing on the lute in the Śatapatha Brāhmana According to later tradition, some of the composers of the hymns of the Rigveda belonged to this class The few examples of Kshatriyas acting as priests are mentioned above It is clear from Upanishadic literature that some of the kings of the age were not only the patrons of philosophers but were themselves well versed in the profound philosophical speculations of their times Janaka of the Videhas, Pravāhana Jaivali, Ajātaśatru, and Asvapati Kaikeya are some of the conspicuous names of philosopher kings It seems that some of the Kshatriyas, though as a class they followed other professions, had kept themselves quite alert and abreast of their Brahmin brethren The forward and daring spirits amongst them tried to assert their equality with the Brahmins both in priestcraft and philosophical disquisitions The conclusion seems to be legitimate, therefore, that only when the ritual later on became too elaborate, and the Kshatriyas, on the other hand, became engrossed in the work of conquest, and progressively lost intimate contact with the older dialect, that they receded from the competitive field though only to rise in open rebellion against the Brahmins

While there are a few traditional examples of Kshatriya girls being married to Brahmins, there is not a single example from among the personages of this age where a Brahmin girl has married a Kshatriya Though the Kshatriyas sometimes gave their daughters in marriage to Brahmins yet they seem to have had an objection to marry girls from even prosperous families of the two lower orders

The third order in society, namely the Vaisya, figures singularly little in Vedic literature The Aitareya Brāhmana describes him as tributary to another, " to be lived upon by another," and " to be suppressed at will " Representing the common people, both the composition and the functions of this class are shadowy According to the Taittirīya Samhitā, the greatest ambition of a Vaisya was to be the " Grāmanī "

or the village head-man "The son of a Vaisya woman is never anointed a king," so says the Śatapatha Brāhmana [1] Though, in comparison to the higher classes, the Vaisyas' position was rather insignificant, yet the class was definitely marked off from the Śūdras

The name of the fourth class, the Śūdra, occurs only once in the Rigveda It seems the class represented domestic servants, approximating very nearly to the position of slaves The Śūdra is described as "the servant of another", "to be expelled at will", and "to be slain at will" The Pañchavimsa Brāhmana defines this position still more precisely when it declares that the Śūdra, even if he be prosperous, cannot but be a servant of another, washing his superior's feet being his main business Yet according to the same work some of the king's ministers were Śūdras The milk to be used for fire-oblation was not allowed to be milked by a Śūdra He was not to be addressed by a person consecrated for a sacrifice He is declared to be unfit for sacrifice and not allowed even to be present in the hall where the sacrifice was being offered The Śatapatha Brāhmana goes to the length of declaring that the Śūdra is untruth itself [2] Illicit connection between an Ārya male and a Śūdra female is mentioned, and the uneasiness felt by the Śūdra husband whose wife is a mistress of an Ārya is also hinted at [3] In this connection we may mention that Vasishtha quotes a Brāhmana text to the effect that a woman of the black race, meaning the Śūdra people, was meant only for enjoyment and not for the furtherance of any higher motives [4]

We have seen that in the Rigveda a marked distinction was drawn between the Ārya and the Dāsa In the later Vedic literature this demarcation tends to be drawn between the Ārya and the Śūdra, who is being described as of dark colour As if to preserve the memory of this change, as a part of sacrificial rites a mock fight between an Ārya and a Śūdra, in which the former necessarily wins, is prescribed This change is perhaps due to the increasing association between the Aryan people and the Indian aborigines resulting

[1] Eggeling's translation, pt v, p 326
[2] Eggeling's trans, pt v, p 446 [3] Ibid, p 326 [4] Infra, p 93

in illicit unions not only between Ārya males and Śūdra females but also between Śūdra men and Ārva women

Besides the four orders are mentioned in the Rigveda, occupations like blacksmith, leather-worker, barber, physician, goldsmith, merchant, and chariot-builder We do not know which of these occupations were comprised in any of the four orders, nor can we say that each of them constituted a separate class We know for certain that the status of the Rathakāra—the chariot-builder—was high enough to preclude his being classified with the Śūdras The formulæ for placing the sacrificial fire include one for the Rathakāra, indicating his high status even in religious matters

It is not only the variety of occupations that is striking, but also the fact that one and the same occupation bore different names The husbandman and potter have each more than one appellation We shall see later that two groups, following the same occupation, have different names and are recognized as independent castes or sub-castes Naming is the first step towards distinction We should, therefore, attach due significance to the fact of one and the same occupation being given different names, either through individual or provincial peculiarities, in the Vedic literature

That some of the occupations at least had become hereditary is probable The use of the patronymic, derived from the name of an occupation, lends support to this view " kaulāla," " dhaivara," " pauñjishtha," and " vānija " are used in the sense of the son of a kulāla (potter), of a dhīvara (fisherman), of a puñjishtha (fisherman), and a vanij (merchant)

Four names occurring in the Vedic literature, viz Āyogava, Chandāla, Nishāda, and Paulkasa, deserve more than passing notice A king, named Marutta Āvikshita, is called the Āyogava The meaning of the word is doubtful, but it must be pointed out that in the literature of the next period it is regularly given as the name of one of the mixed castes The references to the Chandālas in the Yajurveda clearly show them to be a degraded people In the next period, it will be seen, Chandālas are invariably described as the offspring of a Śūdra father and a Brahmin mother Whether their degraded position in the Vedic period was due to such mixed descent is more than can be ascertained At the same time the possibility of such an explanation must not

be wholly overlooked, inasmuch as illicit connection between a Śūdra male and an Aryan female is sometimes hinted at But the more plausible explanation would be that the Chandālas were a degraded group of aborigines In the first place, it is difficult to see how a whole race of people could be the outcome of illicit unions between Aryan females and Śūdra males Secondly, they are not the only group described as degraded people in the Vedic literature The Paulkasas are described as a despised race of men in the Brhadāranyaka Upanishad This use of a derivative noun from Pulkasa shows the fixity of the group The term also occurs in later literature as the name of the offspring of a Nishāda or Śūdra by a Kshatriya woman Such a connection of Kshatriya females, as a regular feature, is much more than can be believed It is more reasonable to hold that both these groups, Chandāla and Paulkasa, were sections of the aborigines that were, for some reason or another, despised by the Aryans The Nishādas, on the other hand, seem to have been a section liked by the Aryans, probably because they were amenable to their civilized notions The Vedic expression "pañchajanāh" is explained by tradition, belonging to the latter part of this period, to mean the four varnas and the Nishādas, a fact which shows that these people had, by this time, become quite acceptable to the Aryans This conclusion is also borne out by a text of the Kaushītakī Brāhmana requiring the sacrificer in a particular rite to reside temporarily with the Nishādas It seems that the Vedic Dāsa, by constant association and slow assimilation, had been partially turned into the Śūdra and partially into the Nishāda, while the refractory and incorrigible elements were despised and styled Paulkasa and Chandāla

We have seen that the three classes of the early portion of the Rigveda were later solidified into four groups, more or less compact, with three or four other groups Though these groups were very nearly exclusive units, upward or downward march of individuals was not altogether an impossibility, though it must have been an infrequent occurrence Only the first three orders may be said to have been recognized as far as religious and ritualistic life was concerned The Śūdra, though he was received within the precincts of the Aryan fold, was systematically debarred from

following the religious practices of the Aryans Nay, the ideas of untouchability were first given literary expression in connection with the Śūdras and the sacrifice There were also various inequalities in the matter of religious practices between the other three classes The impression is clearly gained that only the Brahmin and the Kshatriva were the two important orders in the society The former was steadily gaining exclusive influence with the increasing complexity of the sacrificial ritual, while the latter produced, only off and on, individuals capable of keeping themselves abreast of the former It was in keeping with this that the third order, Vaisya, was spoken of as the taxable group, and the fourth order, Śūdra, was denied any justice Each order seems to have been habitually endogamous though occasionally Brahmins married Kshatriya females, and all the three higher orders now and then might have kept Śūdra mistresses There was a variety of specialized occupations about which we have no means of ascertaining whether they were included in one or the other of the four orders They seem to have been hereditary rather by custom than by regulation The prohibition of dining in the company of others is not laid down in connection with these orders, though the general idea is there It is only those who were performing a certain rite or who believed in a certain doctrine that were forbidden to dine in the company of others [1]

The Brahmanic literature of the post-Vedic period, while reiterating that there are only four varnas, mentions certain mixed castes (sankara jāti) and also a group of outcast classes (antyāvasāyin) The sacred laws of the Āryas are designed to expound "varna-dharma", i e the duties ostensibly of the four orders The text-books of the different schools may broadly be analysed into four parts The first part, generally very short, deals with the "āsramas" (four stages in individual life) and their duties, the second part, forming a large portion of the book, really deals with "varna-dharma" Much of the law proper is treated in this section under the heading, "duties of the Kshatriya" The two

[1] *Vedic Index*, ii, p 257

Note—The above discussion is principally based on facts collected in the *Vedic Index* Special attention may be drawn to the articles on Ārya, Brāhmana, Chandāla, Dāsa, Kshatriya, Nishāda, Paulkasa, Śūdra, Vaisya, and Varna

other parts deal with expiatory acts and inheritance Though the main bulk of the law is treated under "varna-dharma", yet the "Śūdra" does not figure much in these texts The "varna-dharma" of the "Śūdra" is such that it does not require elaborate regulation It may justly be said that the "Śūdra" was left to himself as far as his internal affairs were concerned Mandlik observes, "The non-regenerate class thus seems to form a group by itself, and its internal economy is not specially provided for by the ordinary Ārya writers on law"[1] Their case is provided for by the general dictum, fathered on Manu, that the peculiar laws of countries, castes, and families may be followed in the absence of sacred rules[2] The other classes are considered derivative, and therefore so much beneath notice that only fourfold humanity is always alluded to and prevention of the confusion of these castes (varna-sankara) is considered as an ideal necessity[3] Mixture of castes is regarded to be such a great evil that it must be combated even though the Brahmins and the Vaisyas have to resort to arms, a function which is normally sinful for them[4] As the outcasts were deprived of the right to follow the lawful occupations of the twice-born men and, after death, of the rewards of meritorious deeds,[5] it follows that the law-givers had no concern for them They were enjoined to live together and fulfil their purposes, sacrificing for each other and confining other relations to themselves[6] Of the mixed castes those that were the outcome of hypergamous unions, were proposed to be treated in two different ways Gautama excludes from the brahmanic law only the issue of a Śūdra female by males of the first three orders[7] It is not clear how he would like to treat the remaining three possible groups Kautilya, on the other hand, lays down that such mixed castes shall take to the occupations and practise the religious rites of the Śūdras[8] Persons born of unions in the inverse order of castes—technically known as the pratiloma (mixed) castes—are, of course, outside the pale of the sacred law, with the possible exception of one, viz the Sūta

[1] Mandlik, p 432
[2] Vasishtha, p 4
[3] Gautama, p 212
[4] Baudhāyana, p 236
[5] Ibid, p 277
[6] Baudhāyana, p 220
[7] Gautama, p 197
[8] *Arthaśāstra*, i, p 165

Among the four varnas, the old distinction of Ārya and Śūdra now appears predominantly as Dvija and Śūdra, though the old distinction is occasionally mentioned. The first three varnas are called Dvijas (twice-born) because they have to go through the initiation ceremony which is symbolic of rebirth. This privilege is denied to the Śūdra who is therefore called "ekajāti" (once born).[1] The word "jāti" which is here used for "varna", henceforward is employed more often to mean the numerous sub-divisions of a "varna". It is also the vernacular term for a "caste". A rigorous demarcation of meaning between "varna" and "jāti", the former denoting the four large classes and the latter only their sub-divisions, cannot, however, be maintained. The word is sometimes indiscriminately used for "varna".

This period sees a great consolidation of the position of the Brahmin class, while the degradation of the Śūdras comes out in marked contrast to the growing superiority of the Brahmins. The discomfiture of the Kshatriyas is complete, and the Vaisyas, at least the general mass, have progressively approximated to the Śūdras. The first indication of the appreciation of the Brahmin's position is to be found in the implication underlying the sacred law that in strictness its dictates are meant primarily for the Brahmins. Vasishtha quotes some Vedic texts to inculcate the view that a Brahmin is born with three debts, viz. to the gods, to the manes, and to the sages. The discharge of these debts was to be achieved through sacrifices, progeny, and Vedic studies. These are fulfilled through the life of a student and of a householder. According to the philosophy of life current in this period, these debts should have been common to the Kshatriya and the Vaisya, yet it is only the Brahmin that is singled out as pre-eminently the one varna on whom the discharge of these debts was incumbent. The three lower castes are ordered to live according to the teaching of the Brahmin, who shall declare their duties while the king is exhorted to regulate their conduct accordingly.[2]

The importance of sacrifices and ritualism had been growing and with it the prestige of the priest. The privilege of officiating at sacrificial sessions and other religious rites was exclusively preserved as a divinely appointed and

[1] Vasishtha, p. 9 [2] Vasishtha, pp. 7, 8, 56.

hereditary function of the Brahmins. As the monopolist of ritual procedure, the Brahmin naturally became important. In another way also, he gained in respect because he fulfilled a very fundamental function in the general philosophy of life of these times. As the Mahābhārata has it, "sacrifice sustains both the manes and the gods,"[1] and the Brahmin alone could ensure the proper performance of sacrifices. He was further represented as very beneficial to the political head of the society. Vasishtha quotes a Vedic text, declaring that the king obtains the sixth part of the merit which Brahmins accumulate by means of their sacrifices and good work.[2] Gifts had been praised since the Vedic times, and in the literature of this period they were enjoined as a moral duty, the performance of which brought merit to the giver. "He who, placing on the skin of a black antelope, sesamum, gold, honey, and butter, gives it to a Brahmin over-comes all sin."[3] Āpastamba declares that a king, who without prejudice to his servants gives land and money to deserving Brahmins, gains endless heavenly worlds. The Brahmin alone could rightfully accept the gifts. As a channel of easy acquisition of merit he thus gained added importance. "The offering made through the mouth of a Brahmin, which is neither split nor causes pain (to sentient creature) nor assails him (who makes it), is far more excellent than an agnihotra."[4] All these circumstances and the growing unintelligibility of the scriptural language conspired to make the Brahmin almost a god on earth. Even the hard-headed Kautilya suggested that in order to avert such providential calamities as fire, flood, and pestilence, the people should worship gods and Brahmins.[5] The pre-eminence of the Brahmin was so great that the Mahābhārata declared that really speaking there was only one varna, viz. the Brahmin, and the other varnas were merely its modifications.[6] Though Gautama quotes the Vedic texts which declare that the Kshatriyas assisted by the Brahmins prosper, and that the union of the two alone upholds the moral order, yet he

[1] *Mahabhārata, Śanti Parva*, 23–5, 72

[2] Vasishtha, p. 8

[3] Vasishtha, p. 135

[4] Vasishtha, p. 139. The agnihotra has been the most fundamental and important ritual function that was enjoined on the first three castes since the earliest Vedic times.

[5] *Arthasāstra*, ii, p. 419

[6] *Mahabhārata, Śanti Parva*, 50, 59

lays down that when a king and a Brahmin pass along the same road the road belongs to the Brahmin and not to the king [1] Vasishtha declares that the Brahmins' king is Soma [2] The Mahābhārata goes even further, and emphasizes the subordinate position of the Kshatriya, whose only support is pronounced to be the Brahmin It explains away earthly sovereignty of the Kshatriya by a social analogy Just as a widow takes to her deceased husband's brother, so has the earth resorted to the Kshatriya in default of the Brahmin Between a hundred year old Kshatriya and a ten year old Brahmin the latter is said to be like the father [3] And this in a society where age was the greatest consideration for respect [4] The superiority of a child Brahmin over an aged Kshatriya is also supported by Āpastamba [5] It is thus clear that the union of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya that was advocated by Gautama must be understood to mean not an alliance between two equals but a tacit domination of the former over the latter

This pre-eminence of the Brahmin had secured him many social privileges According to Gautama, all varnas must serve their superiors,[6] which meant that the Brahmin, as the most superior among the varnas, was entitled to the services of the others Naturally the Brahmin recognized no teacher who was not a member of his varna It was only in times of distress that he was allowed to study under a non-Brahmin teacher, whom he surpassed in venerability on the completion of his studies [7] This was against the general notions of respectability according to which the teacher must always be venerated by his pupils The Brahmin might follow no gainful activity, yet as long as he continued the study of the Vedas, he was said to have fulfilled his purpose [8] The Brahmin was exempt from the usual taxes [9] If a Brahmin, who followed his lawful occupations, found a treasure, he had not to hand it over to the king [10] Both the person and the property of the Brahmin were absolutely inviolate Stealing the gold of a Brahmin

[1] Gautama, p 235 Āpastamba, pp 124–5
[2] Vasishtha, p 8
[3] *Mahābharata*, *Anuśāsana*, 12, 21–3
[4] Gautama, p 208
[5] Āpastamba, p 53
[6] Gautama, pp 231
[7] Ibid , p 209
[8] *Mahābhārata*, *Śānti Parva*, 14, 59
[9] Vasishtha, p 8
[10] Vasishtha, p 18

and killing a Brahmin were regarded as heinous sins (mahāpātaka)[1] Raising one's hand or weapon in anger against a Brahmin, actually striking him, causing blood to flow from his body, unintentionally killing him, and wilfully murdering him were offences in the ascending order of their heinousness[2] Wilful murder of a Brahmin was, of course, inexpiable The Brahmin was exempt from corporal punishment[3] Even Kautilya allowed this privilege to the Brahmin, except when he was guilty of high treason[4] He also exempted him from torture being applied to elicit confession[5] The estate of heirless persons of the Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Śūdra varnas went to the king, who had to distribute it among learned Brahmins, while the estate of an heirless Brahmin belonged directly to them[6] The property of a Brahmin is described as the worst poison destroying him who takes it[7] On the other hand, in order to defray the expenses of a marriage or of a religious rite, he may help himself to the money of a Śūdra by fraud or by force He may do the same with the property of those members of the other varnas who neglect their religious duties[8] Even to accuse a Brahmin of a crime that he might have committed, is a sin[9] He must not be forced to be a witness at the instance of a non-Brahmin unless he is already mentioned in the plaint[10] Even as regards the highly lauded and essential duty of a householder, viz hospitality, the Brahmin has his privileges He need not treat a non-Brahmin as his guest unless he comes on the occasion of a sacrifice[11]

Though the various privileges of the Brahmins are sanctioned by the lawgivers, they insist from time to time that the Brahmin shall keep to the moral discipline of his class and conscientiously perform the duties laid down for him They declare that a Brahmin who deviates from this path is equal to a Śūdra and as such there can be no harm in neglecting him[12]

[1] Vasishtha, p 5
[2] Baudhāyana, p 212 Gautama, p 279
[3] Gautama, p 242 Baudhāyana, p 201
[4] *Arthasastra*, ii, p 277
[5] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 270
[6] Gautama, p 305 Baudhāyana, p 179
[7] Baudhāyana, p 180
[8] Gautama, p 270
[9] Gautama, p 279
[10] Gautama, p 243
[11] Gautama, pp 204–5
[12] Vasishtha, pp 16–18, 46 Baudhāyana, p 248

The statement that God created the Śūdra to be the slave of all is repeated and he is given the name "pādaja" (born from the feet) He is to be supported, to be fed, to be clothed with the remnants and castaways of food and raiment by the three varnas[1] He is contrasted with the Ārya, who, though younger than he, must be respected by him by rising from his seat[2] Whereas in the Vedic period, as we have seen, the Dāsa was described as the black race, in this period the Śūdra is given that appellation[3] Vasishtha declares him to be a burial ground The Veda must not be recited in his presence, no advice must be given to him, nor the remnants of the offerings to the gods Holy law must not be expounded to him, nor must he be asked to perform a penance[4] He shall use the old shoes, discarded garments, etc, of the members of the other varnas, and eat the leavings of their food[5] So great was the feeling against the Śūdra performing a sacrifice that Gautama exhorted a person to cast off his father if he either sacrificed with the money given by a Śūdra or officiated at his sacrifice[6] It is well known that in the story of the Rāmāyana, Rāma is represented to have killed a Śūdra who was practising austerities[7] The Śūdra was regarded to be so despicable, that a Brahmin, when, out of sheer necessity, he had to take up the Śūdras' occupation, was asked not to mix with them[8]

It is clear that the Śūdra could not perform a sacrifice, could not listen to or recite the Vedic texts, nor could he practice austerities He was categorically denied the right of initiation and consequently the first stage of individual life (āsrama)—the studentship Out of the other sacraments marriage is the only one, which is explicitly applicable to the Śūdras While laying down their duties Gautama observes "For him (Śūdra) also (are prescribed) truthfulness, meekness, and purity Some declare that instead of sipping water (the usual method of purification) he shall wash his hands and feet (He shall also offer) the funeral oblations"[9] Āpastamba opines that the Śūdra is not

[1] *Mahābhārata*, *Śānti*, 34, verses 31, 34, 36, 38, 59, 310,
[2] Gautama, p 206 [3] Āpastamba, p 87 Vasishtha, p 96
[4] Vasishtha, p 95 [5] Gautama, p 230
[6] Ibid, p 274
[7] *Rāmāyana* (Nirnaysagar Ed) *Uttarakānda*, vii, 4, 76
[8] Gautama, p 211 [9] p 230

entitled to the rite of initiation, the study of the Veda, and the kindling of the sacred fire His works (rites) are declared by implication to be unproductive of rewards either in this world or in the next [1] According to Gautama, the Śūdra, if permitted, may use "namah" (obeisance) as his "mantra" (holy incantation) He states that some allow him to offer Pākayajñas [2] (minor sacrifices to be offered in the fire kept at home, as distinguished from major sacrifices offered in the Śrauta or Vedic fire) The Mahābhārata also takes the same view of the Śūdra's religious duties A Pākayajña may be offered on his behalf without his being initiated for it Ample Dakshinā (fees) seems to be a prominent feature of such sacrifices offered by the Śūdras, of whom one named Paijavana is said to have given away by thousands [3] It is apparent from these data that the Śūdra had no right to perform any of the important sacraments As he could not kindle the sacred fire, his marriage was certainly not regarded as a sacrament, intended for the fulfilment of religious duties but only as a sexual union As the minor sacrifices called the Pākayajñas were to be offered in the domestic sacred fire, and as we have seen above the Śūdra had no right to kindle this fire, we cannot attach much significance to the permission given to the Śūdra to offer these sacrifices It only means that the Brahmin was not entirely unwilling to open up certain channels through which fees might flow to him, even though the donor might be a Śūdra It may be mentioned that even the Dasyus were encouraged to offer such sacrifices [4] The utter indifference shown to the Śūdra is further brought out by the fact that out of the eight forms of marriage the two forms recommended for the Śūdra are entirely devoid of religious content In fact, one of them may be termed rape as consummated marriage And the curious justification offered for this prescription is that the Śūdras are not particular about their wives [5]

We cannot agree with Professor Max Muller when he says that the Grhya Sūtras never expressly exclude the Śūdra

[1] pp 1-2 p 231
[3] *Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva*, 59, 40-2
[4] Ibid [5] Baudhāyana, p 207

from the rite of initiation [1] The ages at which this rite was to be performed are laid down only for the three classes and not for the Śūdra To us it appears that this is sufficient evidence that the Grhya Sūtras did not contemplate the initiation of the Śūdra The initiation ceremony opened the door to the study of the Veda The Śūdra has, throughout, been debarred from that study He has never been allowed to hear Vedic recitations How possibly could the Grhya Sūtras, under these circumstances, even dream of the Śūdra being initiated ? The fact appears to be that undeserving as he was of this rite, he was simply ignored

The Mahābhārata says that the Śūdra can have no absolute property, because his wealth can be appropriated by his master at will [2] If the master of a Śūdra has fallen into distress, the latter shall support him, and his treasure, if any, shall be placed at the disposal of the poor master [3] The king is enjoined to appoint only persons of the first three classes over villages and towns for their protection [4] A Śūdra trying to hear the Vedic texts shall have his ears filled with molten tin or lac , if he recites the Veda his tongue shall be cut off, and if he remembers it he shall be dismembered If he assumes a position of equality with twice born men, either in sitting, conversing, or going along the road, he shall receive corporal punishment [5] A Śūdra, committing adultery with women of the first three castes, shall suffer capital punishment, or shall be burnt alive tied up in straw [6] Kautilya restricts the punishment by burning only to the crime of the violation of a Brahmin female [7] When a Śūdra calls himself a Brahmin, either his eyes shall be destroyed by means of a poisonous ointment, or he shall be fined eight-hundred "panas" [8] If he intentionally reviles twice-born men or criminally assaults them, the limb with which he offends shall be cut off [9] Kautilya, too, lays down the same punishment, but only in the case where the assault is directed against

[1] *A History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature* (Panini Office edition, 1912), p 106

[2] *Mahabhārata, Śānti Parva,* 89, 59

[3] Gautama, p 231

[4] Āpastamba, pp 161–2

[5] Āpastamba, p 165 Gautama, p 236

[6] Āpastamba, p 165 Vasishtha, pp 109–10 Baudhāyana, p 233

[7] *Arthaśāstra,* ii, p 285

[8] *Arthaśāstra,* ii, pp 275–6

[9] Gautama, p 236

a Brahmin[1] On the other hand, a Śūdra can be abused by a Brahmin without entailing any punishment[2] A Snātaka (a Vedic student) is exhorted not to go on a journey alone in the company of a Śūdra[3] For a Brahmin to eat the food given by a Śūdra is a sin that must be expiated, and to avoid taking it is one of the few things the practice of which assures a Brahmin of bliss in heaven[4] Gautama goes further and forbids a Snātaka to accept water given by a Śūdra[5] Though, as we shall see later on, marriage between a Brahmin male and a Śūdra female is contemplated, yet it is said that such a wife is espoused merely for pleasure and not for the fulfilment of a religious purpose[6] Cohabitation with a Śūdra female is a sin, which a Brahmin must wipe out[7] A Brahmin who marries a Śūdra wife and dwells for twelve years in a village, where only well-water is obtainable, becomes equal to a Śūdra[8] A Śūdra committing adultery with an Aryan woman shall have his organ cut off and his property confiscated[9] Altogether so unworthy is the Śūdra that, if he comes as a guest, he shall be fed together with one's servants and that, too, perhaps after getting some work out of him[10]

The Śūdra, thus had no civil or religious rights Nevertheless, there are sentiments of compassion about him expressed here and there A master is exhorted to support his Śūdra servant when he is unable to work,[11] and to offer funeral oblation for him in case he dies childless[12] Rarely, as in one case given by Āpastamba,[13] he is allowed to cook food, even though meant for a religious function, under the supervision of members of the other three classes This extraordinary tolerance towards the Śūdra might have been dictated by the peculiar conditions prevailing in the south during the early migration of the Indo Aryans

Though theoretically the position of the Śūdras was very low, there is evidence to show that many of them were

1 *Arthaśastra*, ii, p 238 Āpastamba, p 165
Gautama, p 237 3 Baudhāyana, pp 217, 243
4 Baudhāyana, pp 224, 313 5 Gautama, p 70
6 Vasishtha, p 96 7 Baudhāyana, p 313 Āpastamba, p 84
8 Baudhāyana, p 244 9 Gautama, p 236
10 Gautama, pp 204–5 Baudhāyana, p 239
11 Gautama, p 230
1 *Mahabhārata, Śānti Parva*, 59, 38 13 Āpastamba, p 103

well-to-do[1] Some of them succeeded in marrying their daughters in royal families Sumitrā, one of the four wives of king Dasaratha, was a Śūdra Some of them even worked their way up to the throne The famous Chandragupta is traditionally known to be a Śūdra The Abhīras who ruled over the Deccan for some time must have been Śūdras

The Vaisya, though traditionally classed with the first two varnas, is grouped on many occasions with the Śūdras As we shall see later on, the occupations ordained for these two classes are almost identical Gain by labour is mentioned as a special mode of acquisition, both for Vaisya and Śūdra[2] Apart from this increasing similarity of occupations the special occupations of the Vaisya were such that they could not be well defined "The humblest tender of cows for a master may be of this caste, or the work may be done by one outside the Aryan ranks"[3] The Vaisyas are understood to consist of labourers[4] Kautilya leaves no doubt as to the equality of occupational status between the two castes The Bhagavadgītā proudly proclaims that its religious doctrines can lead even the Vaisyas and the Śūdras to salvation[5] In this matter these two classes stand in marked contrast to the other two classes We are led to believe that the Vaisya, in spite of the injunction of the Brahmins that he should fulfil the duties prescribed for him in the sacred law, had so much fallen off that a less rigid and elaborate way of working out one's salvation was necessary for him Out of the eight forms of marriage, the two prescribed for the Vaisyas are the same as those recommended for the Śūdra According to Vasishtha when a Brahmin marries outside his varna, his sons by a Vaisya and a Śūdra wife shall inherit equal shares[6] Similarly only one common formula of welcome need be used for a Vaisya and a Śūdra guest Both of them are to be fed together with one's servants[7] In the chaos that is supposed to have ensued after Parasurāma had slaughtered the Kshatriyas, we are told that both the Śūdras and the Vaisyas discarded the Brahmanic rules of discipline and

[1] Compare the allusion to Paijavana and other wealthy Śūdras in the *Mahābhārata*

[2] Gautama, p 229

[3] *JAOS*, vol xiii, p 82

[4] Ibid, p 83

[5] *Bhagavadgītā*, ix, 32–3

[6] p 89

[7] Gautama, pp 204, 205

violated Brahmin females.[1] The moral of this story is clear. The Vaisyas, like the Śūdras, were ready, as soon as the strong ruling arm was off, to rebel against the Brahmanic rules of conduct. And the growth of Jainism and Buddhism, particularly their quick appeal to the Vaisyas, fully corroborates this inference.

The theory of the divine origin of the four castes is off and on repeated with special stress on the origin of the Śūdra from the feet of the Creator. In the Mahābhārata once at least a slightly material change is introduced in this theory, where we are told that the first three castes were created first, and the Śūdra created afterwards for serving the others. Evidently this divine origin did not prove as comforting to the lower classes as could be desired in the interests of social order. Salvation of self had come to be the outstanding problem of the philosophy of life. If the performance of religious rites, as laid down by the sacred law, could alone lead to salvation, there was no hope for the Śūdra nor even perhaps for the Vaisya, because the former was emphatically forbidden to perform these religious rites and the latter had progressively lost their practice. A philosophy of caste, guaranteeing individual salvation to all, through the performance of duties alone, had to be formulated. Such a theory was calculated to allay the unrest and quell the rebellion against caste that might arise owing to the unsatisfactory nature of the old theory as far as salvation, which had become the most absorbing human interest, was concerned. The Buddhistic religion, however much its followers stood by caste, was ready to declare that Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Śūdra, and Chandāla would be all equal in the world of the gods, if they had acted virtuously in this life, and that a person's worth in life was determined by his right conduct and knowledge. The necessity of closing up the ranks against the onslaught of Buddhism and of assuring individual salvation for all led to the formulation of two slightly differing philosophies of caste.

Gautama observes: "Men of the several castes and orders who always live according to their duty enjoy after death the rewards of their works, and by virtue of a remnant of their merit, they are born again in excellent countries, castes,

[1] *Mahābharata, Śānti Parva*, 48, 70

and families endowed with beauty, long life, learning in the Vedas, virtuous conduct, wealth, happiness, and wisdom Those who act in a contrary manner perish, being born again in various evil conditions "[1] According to Āpastamba, sinful persons are born as low castes and even as animals A person, for example, who steals a Brahmin's gold will be reborn as a Chandāla if he is a Brahmin, as a Pulkasa if he is a Kshatriya and as a Vaina (a mixed caste) if he is a Vaisya Men of the lower castes are reborn in higher castes if they have fulfilled their duties, while men of the higher castes are born in the lower ones as a result of their neglect of the prescribed duties[2] It is clear that according to this lawgiver conscientious practice of the duties proper to one's own varna, led to a birth in a higher varna and thus to salvation Failure to act according to one's varna duties meant birth in a lower caste and finally spiritual annihilation In the Mahābhārata, the upward march from one caste to another in succeeding births till a person is born a Brahmin, is described in detail[3]

In the Bhagavadgītā the Creator is said to have apportioned the duties and functions of the four castes according to the inherent qualities and capacities of individuals[4] Of course, this theory fails to explain how the individuals at the very beginning of creation came to be possessed of peculiar qualities and capacities This theory of origin, though it slurs over the above difficulty, tries to provide a rational sanction for the manifestly arbitrary divisions God separated the people into four varnas, not merely because they were created from different limbs of his body nor again out of his will, but because he found them endowed with different qualities and capacities In so far as a justification is sought to be given for a social phenomenon, which was hitherto taken for granted, the Bhagavadgītā records a remarkable change in attitude In conformity with this, the life-philosophy preached in the book furnishes us with the other philosophy of caste referred to above The whole episode which is made the occasion for the enunciation of the new philosophy, the philosophy of duty, ends with the burden that an individual must do the duty proper to his varna Arjuna, the hero, is dismayed

[1] p 235
[2] pp 102–3, 125
[3] *Mahābhārata, Anusāsana Parva*, 4, 6
[4] *Bhagavadgītā*, iv, 13

and refuses to fight Krishna, the preacher, ultimately persuades him to fight, and thus to do the duty proper to his Kshatriya varna The work is a supreme effort to drive home the truth that man must perform the duties proper to his social state faithfully and truthfully and then salvation shall be his without doubt No work is bad, impure, or sinful It is only the way in which work is done that determines its worth The peculiar way in which all work must be done is the way of dedicating it to God The philosophy is beautifully illustrated in two episodes of the Mahābhārata the one about Jājali, the trader, and the other about Vyādha, the butcher We may compare a similar phenomenon from the social history of Mediaeval Europe Mr R H Tawney observes "The facts of class status and inequality were rationalized in the Middle Ages by a functional theory of society" [1]

This philosophy of caste takes the sting off the institution and thus skilfully stereotypes it During the later ages, therefore, this theory of caste has been rightly harped upon The difference between the Sūtra theory of caste, detailed above, and this theory is significant The Brahmin authors of the Sūtras promised salvation to the Śūdra only through the intermediacy of births in higher castes In plain words it was tantamount to asking him to wait till doomsday The mark of inferiority was permanently impressed on him, and his low status was declared by implication to render it impossible for him to work out his salvation in his own person The concession granted testifies only to the liberalism of the writers on Dharma The Gītā, on the other hand, disarms opposition on more counts than one First, it tries to provide a rationale for the original division into four varnas Secondly, it unequivocally asserts the virtual equality of these divisions as far as the value of their distinct work and their inherent capacity for working out individual salvation are concerned

We have seen that in the Vedic age Kshatriyas sometimes discharged the priestly functions and preached the higher philosophy Visvāmitra is one of those Kshatriyas who, according to later tradition, officiated as a priest In the Rigveda, he and Vasishtha, the Brahmin, are said to have been the priests of King Sudās at different times [2] In the

[1] *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p 22
[2] Muir, vol i, p 375

Epic literature, Vasishtha, the Brahmin, and Visvāmitra, the Kshatriya, figure as opponents in many a story [1] The principal cause of quarrel between them appears to be the desire of Visvāmitra to reckon himself a Brahmin On the one hand, wonderful powers of enabling his royal patrons to lead their sacrifices to a successful finish, are credited to Visvāmitra and on the other great valour and military skill are attributed to him Vasishtha is described as a perfectly peaceful and learned Brahmin, able to complete the most difficult sacrifices as well as to meet the most deadly weapons of Visvāmitra in the characteristic way of the Brahmins, viz with the help of Brahmanic lustre Reading these stories one cannot fail to get the idea that in the quarrel of these two individuals is epitomized the history of the rivalry between the first two castes Though, in the end, Visvāmitra won Brahminhood, yet Vasishtha is represented as having defeated him on every count, not excepting even his martial skill It seems to us that these stories were designed to teach a lesson to the Kshatriya that his physical prowess was futile before the spiritual force of the Brahmin Visvāmitra is made to remark, "Fie on the Kshatriya's strength By the single brahmanic mace all my weapons are destroyed" [2] While the Brahmins of the Vedic age were content with making pious declarations that they were above the power of the king, and addressing fervent exhortation that the Kshatriyas should work in unison with the Brahmins, those of the later age were emboldened enough to draw a concrete picture of the utter futility of the Kshatriya's weapons against the spiritual prowess of the Brahmin Though Visvāmitra becomes a Brahmin in the end, the Kshatriya is crestfallen His right to act as priest is very hard won Visvāmitra is allowed to become a Brahmin on the one condition that he renounces once for all his ways of the Kshatriyas, and through and through resorts to the methods of the Brahmins No doubt he entered the Brahmin fold, but he could not open up the closed door to his erstwhile associates

The Brahmins, as if not being content with showing the superiority of Brahmanic lustre over martial prowess, created in Parasurāma, a Brahmin, who overpowered the Kshatriyas not by the usual Brahmanic weapon of spiritual

[1] Ibid [2] *Rāmāyana* (Nirnaysagar Ed), 56, 23

force, but by their own military weapons Parasurāma is the champion of the Brahmins and avenges his father's murder on the Kshatriyas He is represented as having destroyed the Kshatriya race in twenty-one campaigns Though he wrests the control of the earth from the hands of the Kshatriyas, he is not prepared to rule over it Everywhere chaos ensues, and the need for the strong arm to govern the people is keenly felt According to one version of the story, on the retirement of Parasurāma some of the Kshatriyas, who had stealthily escaped him, were encouraged to multiply and rule According to another account, the Kshatriyas of the post-Parasurāma age were all a mixed progeny of Kshatriya females and Brahmin males [1] Two of the most skilled of the Kshatriya heroes of the Mahābhārata, namely, Bhīshma and Karna, were reputed to be the most favourite disciples of Parasurāma, the Brahmin teacher of the Kshatriya's art It is clear that the story of Paraśurāma owed its origin—and there are many discrepancies in this story to prove this contention—mainly to the desire of the Brahmins first, to show that the Brahmin's wrong would not remain unavenged , second, to impress the fact that the Brahmins, if they took to arms, would prove themselves immensely superior to the Kshatriyas in warfare and last, to humiliate the Kshatriyas

We conclude from our discussion that the Brahmin was, during the period, very strongly entrenched and that he had sufficiently subdued the Kshatriya Henceforth the Kshatriya as a serious competitor of the Brahmin vanishes from the field Nevertheless he has been mortified And it is our contention, that having succumbed in the age-long struggle within the fold, he breaks away and raises the banner of revolt Both Jainism and Buddhism appear to us to be movements started by Kshatriyas of exceptional ability preaching a new philosophy which were utilized by their immediate followers for asserting the social superiority of the Kshatriyas over the Brahmins Whatever be the express statements about caste, in the original preachings of Mahāvīra and Buddha, a close student of the early literature of these religious movements will feel convinced that the chief social aim of the early writers was the assertion of the pre-eminence

[1] Muir, i, p 452

of the Kshatriyas It is a well-known fact that no Jain Tīrthamkara was ever born in any but a Kshatriya family [1] In Buddhist literature there are several examples where the enumeration of the four castes is headed by the Kshatriya, the Brahmin coming next Many a time the Kshatriyas aggressively put forward claims for prior recognition over the Brahmins [2] To Buddha himself is ascribed the saying that along with the Kshatriyas the Brahmins take precedence over the other castes in the matter of marks of respect to be shown to one's social superiors [3] A legend tells us that Buddha in one of his previous incarnations, wavered as to whether he should be reborn as a Brahmin or a Kshatriya and decided in favour of the latter alternative as the Kshatriya class was then regarded as higher than the Brahmin In one of Buddha's discourses there is a dialogue between Buddha and Ambattha, a Brahmin student, in which the latter is represented as having acknowledged the fact that a Kshatriya's son by a Brahmin wife would be recognized as a Brahmin by the Brahmins but not by the Kshatriyas, because the latter accorded equal status only to the full-blooded Kshatriyas [4]

The express ideas in the Buddhistic literature voice the feeling that caste has nothing to do either with material success in life or with reward after death High caste is not protected from the effects of wrong doing, and to an ascetic caste ought to be a matter of utter indifference One of the Jātaka-stories ends with the declaration from the Bodhisattva that the virtuous do not ask one about his birth if his piety is well known A person's worth in life is determined by right conduct and knowledge [5] Nevertheless, in the various anecdotes about Buddha's former lives an individual's status is regarded as fixed by his conduct and even sometimes by his birth In a dispute between two youths as to whether a person is a Brahmin by birth or by his actions, Buddha is said to have given his decision in favour of the latter

[1] *Hinduism and Buddhism*, by Sir Charles Eliot, vol i, p 110

[2] Fick, pp 17–19, 81–7, also vide Fausboll's translation of *Sutta Nipāta*, pp 23, 52, 75, 192 Dr E J Thomas observes in his book *The Life of Buddha*, p 174 "The claim of the Sakyas to belong to the best caste, that of the warriors, is well known, and though in the discourses the Brahmins are treated respectfully, their claims are criticized and rejected"

[3] Fick, p 209

[4] *Ambattha sutta*, *Dīghanikāya*, No 3

[5] Fick pp 19–20, 28, 30

alternative[1] Thus Buddha is represented as being inclined to accept the divisions, basing them only on the individual's actions and not on his birth That he meant these divisions to be status groups and not mere names is evident from another saying attributed to him, where the highest marks of social respect are claimed for the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins [2] In actual practice it seems that birth determined an individual's status in society much more than the general remarks would lead us to expect Nay, we are inclined to look upon this theorizing about the futility of caste-ideas as mere exhortations, similar to the theorizing of the Brahmins recorded in the Upanishads and the epic literature Buddha, in one of his former lives, had a child by a courtezan who proposed that the child should be given the name of Buddha's father Buddha is said to have thus reflected "A child which is born of a low woman cannot possibly be given the family name"[3] A king was fraudulently made to marry a girl born of a Kshatriya father and a slave mother as if she were a blue-blooded Kshatriya When the king perceived the deceit practised on him he complained to Buddha, who, while consoling him, observed "The family of the mother does not matter, the family of the father alone is important" Buddha's attitude as typified in this remark is not radically different from the brahmanical doctrine The king evidently does not seem to have been satisfied He is represented as having divested his low-born wife of all queenly honours It may be interpreted to be the general rule of the times that the daughter of a Kshatriya male and a slave female could not be recognized as a Kshatriya [4] It is narrated in the introduction to one of the Jātakas how a Sakya-chief—the Kshatriya family in which Buddha himself was born—had great scruples about dining in the same plate with, or taking the food brought by his daughter by a slave woman [5] In this connection it may also be pointed out that, according to later works dealing with Buddha's life, Buddha is never represented to have chosen any but the families of the two higher castes for his previous births [6] In the opinion of the great majority of the monks, caste distinctions had value even after they had joined the

[1] Fick, pp 220–1 [2] Fick, p 209 [3] Fick, pp 20–1
[4] Fick, pp 56–7 [5] Fick, pp 45–6 [6] Fick, p 86

brotherhood Buddha does not countenance this view or practice [1] From these facts we conclude that in the matter of caste-restrictions the preachings and actions of Buddha had only a general liberalizing effect He does not seem to have started with the idea of abolishing caste-distinctions nor do his actions, as described in the Jātaka-stories, demonstrate an utter indifference towards the accident of birth, much less do they evince any conscious effort to annihilate caste Fick has rightly observed that it is wrong to look upon Buddha as a social reformer and Buddhism as a revolt against caste [2]

Whatever might have been Buddha's own views and practice, it is indubitable that his immediate followers believed in the time-honoured restrictions of caste, and being most probably Kshatriyas themselves, utilized the opportunity, offered by Buddha's revolt, to establish Kshatriya pre-eminence among the four castes The complete discomfiture of the Kshatriyas within the Brahmanic fold had made this course inevitable Measuring their strength with the Brahmins and failing in the contest, they naturally turned their attention to the masses In their appeal to the masses to recognize them as the real leaders of society, they must have availed themselves of the general opinion against the Brahmin and made an excellent use of the art of ridicule in drawing a ludicrous picture of the wide contrast between the Brahmin's professions and his practices [3] Use of a language, better understood than Sanskrit by the populace, immensely helped them in their cause It is just because this must have been the probable genesis of Buddhism that the largest bulk of the immediate followers of Buddha were Kshatriyas and other well-to-do non-Brahmins who were dissatisfied with their low position within the Brahmanic fold

[1] Fick, p 83 [2] Fick, p 82
[3] *Sutta Nipāta* (Fausboll's translation), pp 46–51

CHAPTER IV

Caste Through the Ages (*Continued*)

THE post-Vedic period testifies to the rigid stratification and internal solidarity of the four varnas Each group was recognized as distinct, almost complete in itself, for its social life Among the laws that were valid, provided they did not contradict the sacred precepts, are those of castes "Cultivators, traders, money-lenders, and artisans have authority to lay down rules for their respective classes "[1] It is clear that many of the sub-divisions within each varna—and undoubtedly by now there must have existed in each varna numerous sub-divisions—had rules of their own for their internal management Jāti or caste had now grown to be such an important and universal feature of social organization that in a lawsuit both the plaintiff and the defendant had to register their jāti or caste along with their residence and their village, and one of the questions to be put to the witness of the defendant was to be about the latter's caste While defamation of one's nation or village was punishable with the lowest amercement, that of one's own caste or guild, was meted with the middle one[2] Allegiance to one's caste was thus more important than loyalty to one's nation or village Correctly stating one's caste was evidently thought to be such a matter of common honesty that the level-headed Kautilya says that among persons who may be suspected to be murderers, etc , are those who misstate their caste and "gotra " Persons of low caste and avocation might also be suspected of such serious crimes[3]

The four castes were even supposed to be distinguished by their origin and particular sacraments[4] When officers were chosen from all castes, their positions were to be so adjusted as not to disturb the caste-order of precedence[5] A number of major and minor offences are also enumerated as

[1] Gautama, p 234 , also compare *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 203
[2] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, pp 105, 183, 267
[3] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, pp 260–1
[4] Vasishtha, p 25
[5] *JAOS* , vol xiii, p 95

leading to loss of caste [1] Social intercourse, eating, and intermarriage seem to have been the visible marks of an individual's assimilation in his group [2] Clearly these groups and subdivisions must have had each its own internal organization to carry out effectively the avoidance of social intercourse, eating and intermarriage with their defaulting members Adherence to prescribed duties was not wholly left to the sweet will of the individual, nor was it only to be enforced by the group It was the duty of the king to see that the prescribed duties were performed by the proper individuals If a man always neglected his prescribed duty and did what was forbidden, his property, with the exception of what was required for food and raiment, would be attached till he reformed his ways [3]

The rules and regulations governing social life and individual conduct differed according to the caste, only the four castes being taken into account Others, like the mixed castes and the outcasts, are mentioned, but their status in the eye of law and morals is not clearly defined Even the Dharma was apportioned according to caste The Brahmin was entitled to the practice of the whole of it, the Kshatriya to three-fourths of it, the Vaisya to half, and the Śūdra only to a quarter [4] A Brahmin was to be initiated in his eighth year, a Kshatriya in the eleventh, and a Vaisya in the twelfth [5] A student, while begging alms, must use different formulæ varying with his caste [6] Of the eight forms of marriage only specific ones are enjoined for each caste Where water is drunk for purification it must reach the heart, the throat, and the interior of the mouth in the case of the first three orders respectively In the case of the Śūdra it need touch only the extremity of the lips [7] The higher the caste the shorter was the period of impurity to be observed at birth and death [8] If a man of a lower varna carried the corpse of one of a higher caste or vice versa, the period of impurity was determined by the caste of the deceased The higher castes had their cremation-grounds

[1] Baudhāyana, pp 217–18
[2] Cf Āpastamba, p 5
[3] Gautama, p 238
[4] *Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva*, 34, 32–3
[5] Baudhāyana, p 150
[6] Baudhāyana, p 151 Vasishtha, pp 56–8
[7] Baudhāyana, p 167
[8] Vasishtha, p 29 Gautama, p 246

in different localities from those of the lower castes [1] While asking a guest about his health, the terms to be used, according to the caste of the guest, were "kusala" in the case of a Brahmin, "anāmaya" in the case of a Kshatriya, and "ārogya" in that of a Vaiśya and a Śūdra A Brahmin must feed his Kshatriya guest after his Brahmin guests have had their meals Other guests were to be fed together with one's servants [2] In certain cases where a woman's husband had emigrated, the period of waiting prescribed for her varied according to her caste, being the shortest for a Śūdra and the longest for a Brahmin female [3] The rate of interest chargeable to a Brahmin debtor was 2 per cent, to a Kashatriya 3 per cent, to a Vaisya 4 per cent, and to a Śūdra 5 per cent per month Abusing the habits of a member of a higher caste was punished with fines, commencing from the lowest caste, of three "panas" and rising higher If a person of a higher caste abused one of the lower caste, fines commenced from two "panas" and proceeded in the descending order [4]

Baudhāyana allows a sane man of any of the four castes to be a competent witness in a legal proceeding [5] Vasishtha's opinion is less decided He observes "Śrotriyas, men of unblemished form, of good character, men who are holy and love truth (are fit to be) witnesses Or (men of) any (caste may give evidence) regarding (men of) any (other castes) Let him make women witnesses regarding women, for twice-born men, twice-born men of the same caste (shall be witnesses), and good Śūdras for Śūdras and men of low birth for low caste men" [6] Kautilya prescribes for the four castes, different formulæ to be employed in addressing witnesses and in swearing them in [7] If a Śūdra committed theft, he had to pay back eight times the value of the property stolen In the case of a Vaisya thief, the penalty was doubled A Kshatriya had to pay twice as much as a Vaisya and a Brahmin four times If a learned man committed theft, the punishment was very much increased [8] A man committing adultery with a woman of his caste had to undergo

[1] Gautama, p 250 *Arthaśāstra*, i, p 56
[2] Gautama, pp 204–5 [3] Vasishtha, p 92
[4] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, pp 236–7
[5] Baudhāyana, p 204 Gautama, p 248
[6] Vasishtha, p 82 [7] *Arthaśāstra*, i, p 176
[8] Gautama, p 237

a certain penance[1] Adultery with a woman of a higher caste entailed punishment, the severity of which increased with the caste-status of the woman violated[2] It seems that illicit intercourse with females of lower castes by males of higher castes was not regarded in the nature of a serious offence Only adultery with a low caste woman was condemned as a heinous crime, the punishment for which was either banishment or degradation to the caste of the woman[3] If a Brahmin killed a Brahmin, he was to be banished from the kingdom with the mark of a headless trunk branded on his forehead, but if a man of any of the other three castes committed the same offence, the punishment was death and confiscation of all his property For slaying a Kshatriya, a Vaisya and a Śūdra the fine was a thousand, a hundred, and ten cows respectively with a bull for the expiation of the sin in each case[4] Even in the matter of taxation there seems to have been much inequality on the basis of caste From Buddhist literature we gather that both the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins, though they owned the greater portion of the land, were free from taxes[5]

The Śūdra generally was regarded as so low that his food might not be accepted by the Brahmin There is one exception to this attitude of the lawgivers, and that is the permission given by Āpastamba for food being prepared by a Śūdra under the guidance of the higher varnas[6] As we have suggested above this relaxation of the usual rule must have been necessitated by the special conditions of South India from which Āpastamba hailed The same author lays down very strict rules in the matter of acceptance of food by a Brahmin student, who has completed his studies but has not yet entered the life of a householder In his opinion such a person shall not eat in the houses of people belonging to the three lower castes He quotes, but evidently does not approve of, the view that he may take food offered by persons of the two castes, next in order, who follow the prescribed rules[7] Baudhāyana exhorts such a person to beg only

[1] Baudhāyana, p 232 Āpastamba, p 165
[2] Vasishtha, pp 109–10 *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 285
[3] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 285
[4] Baudhāyana, pp 201–2 Āpastamba, pp 78–9 *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 270
[5] Fick, p 119
[6] Āpastamba, p 103
[7] Ibid, pp 66–7

uncooked food from the members of the first three castes and from the carpenters,[1] (lit. chariot-makers). He enjoins a Brahmin to eschew Śūdra's food. A Brahmin observing this rule is said to be the worthiest object of gifts. If the injunction is broken, dreadful consequences will follow both for the recalcitrant individual as well as for his progeny. Recitation of the Veda or offering of sacrifices cannot obliterate the evil effects of such action. A person who dies with a Śūdra's food in his stomach will be born again as a pig or a Śūdra. If after partaking of such food a Brahmin be so unwise as to have conjugal intercourse, the offspring will belong to the Śūdra, and the Brahmin cannot ascend to heaven.[2] In another passage Vasishtha gives a list of persons whose food must not be eaten. They are the outcast, the Śūdra, the physician, the carpenter, the washerman, the cobbler, etc.[3] Gautama is more strict in his rule, and allows a Brahmin to eat the food, evidently cooked food, given only by such of the twice born persons as are praised for the proper performance of their duties. But he differs from others in this that he recognizes the claims of some people, who are of the Śūdra class, for special treatment. The food offered by a herdsman, a husbandman, an acquaintance of the family, a barber, or a servant may be accepted.[4] A Brahmin may also accept food at the hands of a trader who is not at the same time an artisan,[5] the latter's food being forbidden by Āpastamba to a Brahmin student returned home.[6] According to Gautama the food of a carpenter is also taboo to a Brahmin.[7]

The idea that certain persons defile, while others sanctify the company, if they sit down to a meal in one row, is present in the Sūtras.[8] In this idea lies the origin of the later practice not to dine in the same row with people of other castes than one's own. Āpastamba enjoins a Brahmin student, who has returned home, not to eat sitting in the same row with unworthy people.[9] The shrewd Kautilya advises a spy, engaged in spreading discontent among certain corporations, to make the superiors interdine and intermarry with the inferiors if the custom of any corporation prevented such

[1] p. 159
[2] Vasishtha, pp. 38–9
[3] Ibid., p. 69
[4] Gautama, p. 202
[5] Ibid., p. 268
[6] Āpastamba, p. 67
[7] Gautama, p. 264
[8] Vasishtha, p. 19
[9] Āpastamba, p. 61

intercourse between the two classes or to prevent them from doing this if the custom allowed such interdining and intermarrying [1] Evidently interdining, like intermarrying, was a mark of equality

The idea that an impure person imparts pollution by his touch and even by his near approach to a member of the first three castes finds definite expression in the law-texts of this period, generally with reference to the persons who are outcasted and even specifically in relation to a class of people called Chandālas According to Gautama a man who is guilty of the crime of killing a Brahmin, must live outside the village, entering it only for alms When he thus enters the village he must step out of the road on meeting a member of the first three castes and make the way clear for him [2] On touching a Chandāla or one who has touched a Chandāla one must immediately bathe with one's clothes on [3] If a Brahmin unintentionally eats the food or accepts the presents given by a Chandāla he is outcast But if he does so knowingly he becomes equal to a Chandāla [4] The position of the Chandālas must have been very degraded A householder is exhorted to throw some food for them and the outcasts along with that for crows and dogs outside the house, after all the members of the household have taken their meals [5] Kautilya forbids them to follow the customs of the Śūdras [6] Āpastamba regards it as an offence even to speak to or to look at a Chandāla [7] The outcasts are to live by themselves as a community, teaching each other and marrying among themselves Association with them by pure men is prohibited on pain of excommunication By association is meant either a matrimonial alliance, officiating at their sacrifice, or even touching them [8] It seems that the ideas of pollution had progressed further than these examples lead us to believe Continued use by the Śūdras of the water in a well rendered it unfit for religious purposes This at least seems to be the opinion of Baudhāyana who says that a Brahmin, who marries a Śūdra wife and dwells in a village where only well-water is available, becomes

[1] *Arthaśāstra,* ii, p 437 [2] p 280
[3] Gautama, p 250 Baudhāyana, p 171
[4] Baudhāyana, p 235 [5] Vasishtha, p 50
[6] *Arthaśāstra,* i, p 165 [7] p 103
[8] Baudhāyana, p 220 Vasishtha, p 5

Brahmins who follow the profession of Kshatriyas, or live by trade or by handicrafts[1] When a Brahmin practises trade he is enjoined to abstain from dealing in certain articles If he engages in agriculture, he must not yoke to his plough bullocks whose noses are pierced, nor must he plough after breakfast[2] A few occupations, like that of the carpenter, the charioteer, and the bard, are assigned to some of the mixed castes that are described as the result of mesalliance between the four castes Kautilya allows all the mixed castes, in addition to their specific vocations, or, in case there is any doubt about their proper callings, to take up the occupations of the Śūdra[3] It will be noticed that the theory of occupations as proper pursuits of specific castes does not accommodate the artisans It is not that there were no artisans in the society but that their status does not seem to have been definitized Indeed, Gautama distinguishes the artisans from those who live by personal labour, the latter expression being understood by the commentator to denote labourers like carriers[4] Nay, crafts were so much advanced that pure artisans, who did not deal in their handiworks, were distinguished from artisan-traders[5] Kautilya fills in the gap by assigning to the Śūdra, in addition to his usual duty of service, the work of artisans and court-bards He also allows him to engage in agriculture, trade and pastoral pursuits[6] That even members of the Kshatriya caste did engage in agriculture and other pursuits, not proper for their class, is proved by the Kambojas and Saurāshtras, who, though they are described as corporations of warriors, lived by agriculture and trade as much as by the profession of arms[7] In view of the later degradation of the artisans it is to be noted that Kautilya already describes them as of naturally impure character[8]

In the Buddhistic literature many of the occupations are represented as having been hereditary, and some of the classes like that of the Brahmin and the Gahapati, the representative of the Vaisya, had definitely come to be regarded as such rigid castes that, though their members

[1] Āpastamba, p 144 Gautama, p 255
[2] Vasishtha, pp 12–13 Baudhāyana, p 236
[3] *Arthaśastra*, i, p 165
[4] Gautama, p 228
[5] Ibid, p 263
[6] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 7
[7] Ibid, p 437
[8] Ibid, p 221

followed other occupations than those customary for their classes, they remained the members of their castes [1] The Jātakas mention villages each of which consisted wholly of the followers of one occupation Thus there were smiths' villages and potters' villages [2] Some of the crafts are spoken of as low, e g that of the barber, who is also referred to as of inferior caste [3] Though the Buddhistic evidence as regards the actual professions taken up by the contemporary Brahmins must be taken with some discount—it was but natural for the Buddhist writers to hold up to ridicule their opponents by depicting them as violators of their own precepts—yet it must be pointed out that the cultivating and cattle-rearing Brahmin is an oft-recurring figure in the Pāli texts and once even a Brahmin carpenter is mentioned [4]

Though the orthodox theory of caste is stated in terms of only the broad categories of occupations, yet there are enough indications that in daily life further distinctions based on specialization were recognized Traders and craftsmen are mentioned in specific relation to their special merchandise and craft Giving directions for laying out the plan of the environs of the royal palace within the fort, Kautilya enjoins the localization of trades and crafts in various quarters, and in this connection he mentions, as separate groups, dealers in grain, purveyors of liquids, dealers in cooked rice, those who sell flesh, manufacturers of cotton threads, workers in bamboo, workers in hides, makers of gloves, ironsmiths and artisans working in precious stones [5] From the evidence of the Jātaka literature we may conclude that these specific occupations were hereditary,[6] though the Brahmanic theory of castes referred only to the larger categories The Jātakas further bear testimony to the then incipient practice of naming sub-divisions of artisans on the basis of differences in the methods employed in carrying on the craft Thus the fishermen who used nets and baskets were called "Kevattas" in contradistinction to "Bālisikas" who were angling fishermen [7]

The lawgivers look upon marriage in one's own caste among the four orders as the most ideal and in a way the

[1] Fick, pp 180–1, 255, 276, 278
[2] Ibid, p 280
[3] Ibid, pp 327–30
[4] Ibid, pp 241, 246
[5] *Arthaśastra*, ii, pp 58–9
[6] Fick, pp 276, 278–9
[7] Ibid, p 302

only sanctified practice, though they are prepared to recognize marriages outside the caste as perfectly lawful Vasishtha and Gautama exhort a person about to enter on the life of a householder, to marry a female of one s own caste and the latter opines that it is only the virtuous sons, born of wives of equal caste, who are married in accordance with the approved rites, that sanctify their father's family [1] Baudhāyana recognizes only the son by a wife of equal caste as a sapinda, sons by wives of other castes being not so reckoned [2] But, probably in conformity with the practice of their day, these lawgivers allowed males of higher castes to marry females of lower castes, though they refused to allow the issue of such marriages equal rights with the sons of equal marriages In the matter of inheritance, for example, the share of a son in his patrimony varied according to the caste-status of his mother [3] The offspring of such unequal unions are said to belong neither to the caste of the father nor to that of the mother but are relegated to separate classes, called the intermediate castes The names of these castes as given by Gautama do not correspond to those given by Baudhāyana except in the case of the issue of the marriage of a Brahmin male and a Śūdra female [4] In the case of the first three castes Baudhāyana declares that the offspring of a male of the higher caste and a female of the next lower caste are " savarnas " or of equal caste Consistently he gives the name of the issue of the marriage of a Brahmin with a Kshatriya female as a Brahmin, and that of the union of a Kshatriya male and a Vaisya female as a Kshatriya This seems to represent the old practice, when marriages between males of higher castes and females of castes next in order were regarded as perfectly regular and entailed no disqualification on the issue For even Gautama calls the issue of the union of a Brahmin male and a Kshatriya female " savarna ", though refusing to give a similar name to the progeny of a Kshatriya male and a Vaisya female Kautilya's nomenclature of the mixed castes agrees with that of Baudhāyana except in the case of the issue of a Vaiśya male and a Śūdra female But he designates the children

[1] Vasishtha, p 42 Gautama, pp 194, 197
p 178 [3] Baudhāyana, p 225
[4] Gautama, pp 195–6 Baudhāyana, pp 197–8

of the unions of males of the Brahmin and Kshatriya castes and females of the Kshatriya and Vaisya castes respectively as "savarnas", and does not explicitly speak of them as Brahmins and Kshatriyas [1]

That restriction on such marriages was being newly put during this period is rendered probable by the fact that the rule clearly enunciated in the works of the next period, viz that only a wife of equal caste can be a full and lawful participant in the religious ceremonies of her husband, does not find its counterpart in the legal literature of this period The lawgivers, as we shall note below, disqualify for religious rites only a Śūdra wife Nay, we have reason to believe that the still older practice contemplated unrestricted marriages of the males of the two highest castes with females of the two lower castes—Kshatriya and Vaisya It is said in the Mahābhārata that the sons of a Brahmin born of wives of the first three castes are Brahmins [2]

We may conclude that in olden days Brahmins could marry females from any of the first three castes and Kshatriyas from their own and from among the Vaisyas without any stigma The lawgivers of this period restricted this custom While some of them recognized marriages of males of higher castes with females of the next lower caste as unobjectionable, others confined this attitude to the marriage of a Brahmin with a Kshatriya female and regarded the marriage of a Brahmin or a Kshatriya with a Vaisya female as outlandish This view of marriage with a Vaisya female might have been due to the progressive assimilation of the Vaisya caste to the Śūdras, which we have delineated above

Marriage with a Śūdra female, though theoretically allowed for all the castes, is discountenanced in many practical ways First, even Baudhāyana and Kautilya, who look with no disfavour on the marriage of a male of a higher caste with a female of the next lower caste, do not concede the social status of its father to the child of a Vaisya by a Śūdra female Kautilya regards such an issue as Śūdra, while Baudhāyana calls it Rathakāra Vasishtha expressly forbids any of the first three castes to marry a Śūdra female Such a union according to him leads to the degradation of the

[1] *Arthasāstra*, i, p 164 [2] C V Vaidya, *Epic India*, p 59

family in this life and to loss of heavenly bliss in the next [1] He forbids a householder, who has built the fire-altar for a Śrauta sacrifice, to approach a Śūdra wife, for she is meant for pleasure and not for the fulfilment of the sacred duties He quotes an opinion that the issue of a Brahmin male and a Śūdra female is as impure as a corpse [2] Gautama places the claims of such offspring on a par with the rights of persons that are the issue of marriages between lower caste males and females of the higher castes because both of them are outside the pale of the sacred law [3] Thus the lawgivers definitely set their face against the marriages of men of the first three castes with Śūdra females This is the first pronounced restriction on marriage of the nature of endogamy in Hindu society

The unions of males of lower castes with females of higher castes are contemplated and specifically treated Yet they are not at all countenanced As a matter of fact, they are not marriages at all The progeny of such unions is declared to be without the pale of the sacred law,[4] though the names of the different groups formed by them according to the difference in the caste of the father and the mother are given [5] Such unions are so despised that their offspring, though their actual parentage may be unknown, are held capable of being singled out, because such persons certainly are destitute of virtue and good conduct [6] Chandāla—the untouchable and unapproachable class of this period—is represented as the issue of the union of a Śūdra male with a Brahmin female

The fresh groups, formed by the offspring of the unions of males of higher castes with females of the second lower castes, and those resulting from their unions, may intermarry and give rise to other castes But these last mentioned mixed castes must marry among themselves [7]

It seems reasonable to conclude that endogamy was being sought to be rigorously prescribed and was followed to a large extent, and that the writers were at great pains to explain the origin of so many different castes, which had sprung up either by miscegenation, local segregation,

[1] Vasishtha, pp 5–6 [2] Ibid, pp 95–6
[3] Gautama, pp 197, 306 [4] Ibid, p 197
[5] Baudhāyana, pp 197–8 Vasishtha, pp 195–6 *Arthaśāstra*, ii, pp 202–3
[6] Vasishtha, p 94 [7] *Arthaśāstra*, ii, p 203

occupational specialization, or tribal incorporation, because the orthodox theory mentioned only four castes

Fick summarizes the evidence of the Jātakas thus "Marriage within one's own 'jāti' (caste) was the rule Everywhere in the Jātakas we meet with the effort to keep the family pure through marriage confined to people of one's own standing and profession, and not to allow it to degenerate through mixture with lower elements When the parents desire to marry their son they seek a maiden of the same caste for him" Yet there are instances in the Jātakas where the barriers of caste against intermarriage are surmounted Endogamy was rather a universal custom than a rigid rule of caste [1]

Gautama is the one amongst the lawgivers who recognizes the possibility of a change of caste, which can only come about by marriage [2] If a Brahmin male married a Vaisya female the progeny formed a separate caste If a girl of this caste was married to a Brahmin male, and if their daughter again was married in the same way, and if such unions were continued for five or seven generations from the girl of the original mixed stock, then the issue would be regarded as Brahmins Evidently only the progeny through a female could thus be raised to a higher caste The male issue of such mixed marriages could marry either among themselves or in the caste of their mother Their progeny in the fifth or the seventh generation, if the males continued to marry in the caste of their mother, was reduced to the caste of the female of the original mixed stock Suitable marriages, continued through generations, alone could effect a change in caste That this elaborate rule should have led to any practical results is more than doubtful

The epics contain some examples of intercaste marriages, but they illustrate the practice prevailing among the aristocracy and the sages We will leave out the sages as their stories are shrouded in much mystic lore As for the aristocracy we have already mentioned that Daśaratha had a Śūdra female as one of his wives But the Rāmāyana does not drop any hint that the children of the union were regarded as in any way different from the Kshatriyas Śantanu married Satyavatī, the daughter of a fisherman In

[1] Fick, pp 51–3 [2] pp 196–7

the story of the Mahābhārata no suggestion is made that the issue would be considered lower than the Kshatriyas The girl's father extorts a promise from the king that the son of Satyavatī by him shall be the heir to the throne to the exclusion of his other son, not because he feared that the status of the son of his daughter would debar him from his right to the throne, but because the other son of the king, being the eldest, would be entitled to it As a matter of fact, the Kauravas and the Pāndavas, the heroes of the Mahābhārata, are represented as the descendants of the line of Satyavatī Though the Kshatriyas were willing to marry females of lower castes and bring up the progeny as their equals, yet they could not tolerate their daughters marrying men of faulty descent Thus Draupadī at her choice-marriage raised an objection against Karna on the ground of his low birth

The third period[1] of Indian history, as we have conceived the periods, is marked by two developments in the ideals of the Hindu Dharma, which had an important bearing on the theory and practice of caste The glorification of gifts to Brahmins, which became so absorbing a feature of later Hinduism, was largely the contribution of this age True it is that certain hymns in the Rigveda praise the giving of gifts, and are known as Dāna-Stutis, but they remained outside the main currents of the Upanishadic age, which was seething with philosophical discussions Nor are they so definitive in their tone as the dictum of Manu that gifts alone—and by gifts Manu unequivocally means gifts to Brahmins—is the supreme duty of man in the Kali age[2] Another noteworthy development is the schematic growth of imaginary hells as punishments for certain offenders and the progressive application of the doctrine of rebirth Penances have been always ordained for specific breaches of sacred rules If these are not performed by the offenders, then the picture of torments in hell is held before the sinners The dread of these imaginary hells was a new and perhaps a more effective method of seeing that penances were scrupulously performed Unhesitating faith in the penances

[1] Data which are common to the last period and the two succeeding ones are not repeated Only such details as shed light on the development of the institution are collated

[2] Manu, i, 86

naturally adds to the importance of the Brahmins The theory of rebirth is sought to be skilfully employed as a sanction for certain rules of conduct The perpetrator of a particular offence, it is declared, will be born in such and such a low station The murderer of a Brahmin will be reborn not as man but only as some beast Those who relinquish without necessity their divinely ordained occupations will become the servants of the Dasyus A Śūdra who has fallen from his duty becomes an evil spirit feeding on moths[1] Dread of horrible future births must have helped to uphold the proper practice of at least some of the rules connected with caste The total result of the pronounced developments of these tendencies in this period is to be seen in the preposterous claims put forward in favour of the Brahmins

According to Manu the Brahmin is the lord of this whole creation, because he is produced from the purest part of the Supreme Being, namely the mouth Both the gods and manes have to receive their offerings through them They are, therefore, the most exalted amongst men, so much so that, by his mere birth as a Brahmin, a person is the living embodiment of the eternal law The function that fire served in Vedic worship is now discharged by the Brahmin He replaces, so to say, fire as an intermediary between man and the gods A Brahmin alone can become one with Brahman, for only he of all the varnas is entitled to enter the fourth stage of life, viz asceticism Feeding the Brahmins is one of the acknowledged ways of gaining religious merit[2] Inscriptions of this period testify to the fact that this was not a mere pious wish of the Brahmins, but a living reality acted up to by contemporary men and women[3] A Brahmin is entitled to whatever exists in the world In fact, the whole world is his property, and others live on his charity[4] So sacred are they that not to wait on them is one of the reasons leading to the degradation of the Kshatriyas In purity they are compared with fire and water, the two pre-eminently purifying agents Whatever forbidden acts they do in adversity do not, therefore, contaminate them[5]

[1] Manu, xii, 54–80, also cf Yājñavalkya, pp 1243–58
[2] *Collection of Smritis*, p 423
[3] R G Bhandarkar, *A Peep into the Early History of India*, p 53
[4] Manu, i, pp 93–101 [5] Manu, x, 43, 103

Vishnu is more audacious than Manu in asserting the worth of the Brahmins He is not satisfied with claiming that they are the intermediaries between man and the gods, but would like to enthrone them as the equals of gods, nay even as their masters He observes "The gods are invisible deities, the Brahmins are visible deities The Brahmins sustain the world It is by the favour of the Brahmins that the gods reside in the heavens, a speech uttered by Brahmins (whether a curse or a benediction) never fails to come true What the Brahmins pronounce, when highly pleased (as, if they promise sons, cattle, wealth, or some other boon to a man) the gods will ratify, when the visible gods are pleased the invisible gods are surely pleased as well"[1]

Naturally many are the privileges that are claimed for the Brahmins We will mention only a few of them, not previously noticed While in the last period it was only the Śūdra who was enjoined to serve the varnas and particularly the Brahmin, now all the three varnas are exhorted to serve the Brahmin, the theory being that each lower caste owes subservience to all the higher castes[2] Nārada exhorts a king to be constantly showing honour to the Brahmins for "a field furnished with Brahmins is the root of the prosperity of the world" The king must show himself first in the morning to the Brahmins and salute them To them belongs the right to collect flowers and such other things, to converse with other men's wives without any restraint, and to cross rivers without paying any fare for the ferry If engaged in trade, they may use the ferry without paying any toll[3] Yet with all his exaltation a Brahmin is exhorted to follow the rules of conduct laid down for him lest he should miss the fruit of his Vedic studies And the old saying, applauding the union of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya, is glibly paraded forth[4]

The Śūdra gets socially more degraded, though ways and means are discovered for his religious emancipation In the latter connection, the later division into "sat" and "asat"—good and bad—Śūdras first makes its appearance And the rules regarding social and moral life, evincing greater degradation of the class, must evidently have been devised for the use of the latter class, viz the asat Śūdras Servitude

[1] Vishnu, p 77
[2] *Collection of Smritis*, p 122
[3] Nārada, pp 218–19
[4] Manu, ix, 322

is proclaimed to be a permanent condition of a Śūdra, whether he be actually bought or not A Śūdra must not acquire wealth, because thereby he causes pain to the Brahmins Manu roundly declares that a Śūdra cannot commit an offence causing loss of his caste, so degraded was he [1] Where some kinds of spirituous liquors are forbidden to the members of the twice-born castes, the Śūdra is left to himself [2] Evidently the Śūdra was regarded beyond the pale of moral influence The Brahmin did not even condescend to expect of him an adherence to his high moral precepts A householder, when sipping water for personal purification, must not use it if brought by a Śūdra A member of the first three castes must not travel in the company of Śūdras It seems that the Śūdras were considered to impart some sort of defilement to objects like bed and seat by their touch [3]

In the sphere of religion the tendency is to forbid to the Śūdra the use of the most efficacious formulæ and rites on the one hand, and to exhort him to perform most of the daily rites and the obligatory sacraments prescribed for the other castes The doctrine of salvation through the conscientious discharge of the duties proper to caste is, indeed, mentioned here and there But evidently the Brahmin lawgivers of this period did not feel fully satisfied with that method of salvation They had come to possess too much faith in the efficacy of the rites and sacraments to allow them to be neglected even by the Śūdra The liberalizing influence of the Buddhist revolt and of Vaishnava compassion led the Brahmins to devise ways and means of assuring spiritual betterment to the Śūdra in the Brahmanic way of rites and sacraments It must also be mentioned that the performance of the Brahmanic rites and sacraments by a large section of the people had a selfish interest for the Brahmin, which he could not have entirely lost sight of Rites and sacraments require the services of a Brahmin The Śūdra caste—the largest section of the people—was the only one which was denied sacred knowledge If the Śūdras wanted to perform the Brahmanic rites and sacraments they would invariably have to requisition the services of a Brahmin To allow the Śūdra the privilege of these sacred performances

[1] Manu, viii, 413–14, x, 126
[2] Vishnu, pp 95–6
[3] Vishnu, pp 99, 198–9

was thus to ensure a large clientele for the Brahmin Yet neither the genuine desire to widen the scope of his religious regulations so as to make it possible for the lowly Śūdra to work for his spiritual uplift in the Brahmanic way, nor the selfish motive of procuring mass clientele was strong enough for the Brahmin to override completely his supreme faith in the sanctity of his lore or his high regard for ceremonial purity He began to make a distinction between the Śūdra who behaved properly according to the Brahmin's ideas, and the Śūdra who was slovenly enough not to come up to this standard of conduct—the "sat" and the "asat" Śūdra Only the former class of Śūdras was allowed the privilege of the practice of rites and sacraments though without the use of the Vedic formulæ

Yājñavalkya opines that the usual sacraments are accompanied by the recital of mantras only in the case of the first three castes The Śūdras, by implication, were to perform them without the use of Vedic formulæ They had to use the ordinary formula of "namas" (obeisance) They may offer in the same way the daily sacrifices on the domestic fire and also the annual offering to the manes [1] According to the Śukranīti, a Śūdra must perform all the sacred duties incumbent on him with the help of the "namas" formula, which is here explained in the terminology, usual in the next period, as the mantra given in the Purānas [2] Atri, Laghusankha, and Likhita draw a distinction between the Śūdra and the other castes by enjoining the Śūdra to undertake only charitable and welfare works and to eschew the Vedic performances [3] Manu is more rigorous in his refusal of the right of the Śūdra to fulfil the sacred law of the Āryas But even he is prepared to make a concession in the case of those Śūdras who are desirous of gaining merit, and exhorts them to imitate the practices of the virtuous [4] Yājñavalkya also seems to recognize the higher claims of those Śūdras whose conduct is proper according to the Brahmanic ideas [5] Ushanas, Brhadyama, and Laghuvishnu classify the Śūdras into sat and asat [6] The most potent agent for personal

[1] Yājñavalkya, pp 11, 86 [2] *Śukranīti*, p 163
[3] *Collection of Smritis*, pp 11, 124 182
[4] Manu, x, 126, 128 [5] Yājñavalkya, p 1165
[6] *Collection of Smritis*, pp 48, 101, 122

purification that the Brahmins have thought of, viz the liquid made up by the mixture of cow's milk, curds, ghee, urine, and dung is, however, considered so sacred a thing that if a Śūdra drinks it, he commits as heinous a sin as a Brahmin who drinks spirituous liquor [1]

The approximation of the Vaisya to the Śūdra, already noticed in the last period, is carried further in this In the account of the creation of the four castes from the body of the Supreme Being, Manu groups the two castes together as being produced out of that half of the body, which is less sanctified than the other half, above the navel, from which the Brahmin and the Kshatriya are represented to have emerged [2] While dealing with the question as to who should be treated as his guest by a Brahmin, Manu and Vishnu recommend that a Vaisya and a Śūdra guest may be allowed to eat with one's servants, out of compassion [3] Yājñavalkya prescribes for the Vaisya the same period of death-impurity as the one he recommends for a good Śūdra [4] We have seen that a Brahmin could not generally accept food offered by a Śūdra, though he could eat what was given to him by a Vaisya Some writers of this period extend this privilege to the good Śūdras, thus putting them on a par with the Vaisyas [5]

Of the castes that are supposed to spring from mixed marriages the offspring of hypergamous unions among the first three castes are allowed by Manu the rites and duties of the twice-born The other mixed castes, according to him, are entitled only to the religious privileges of the Śūdra [6] Yājñavalkya's view is clearly stated only in the case of the Chandāla, whom he describes as outside the pale of the sacred law [7] Śukranīti strikes a different note, more in consonance with the religious feelings of the later period, when worship through muttering the name of god came to be believed to be the universal and easy method of spiritual uplift The issue of the mixed marriages of a hypergamous nature, excepting perhaps the offspring of a Brahmin male and a Kshatriya female, are to be treated as Śūdras This view is in marked contrast with that of the Dharma literature,

[1] Vishnu, p 175 *Collection of Smritis*, p 28
Manu, i, 92
[3] Manu, iii, 112 Vishnu, p 216
[4] Yājñavalkya, p 1165
[5] *Collection of Smritis*, p 122
[6] Manu, x, 41
[7] Yājñavalkya, p 67

but in perfect conformity with that of the Arthaśāstra Progeny of unions in the inverse order of castes is assigned to a new category, to be met with in the caste-organization of the later period They are the lowest of the Śūdras and must practise their duties for their religious uplift by repeating only the name of god [1] Thus the pratilomas (offspring of unions of females of higher and males of lower castes) are no doubt outside the pale of the Brahmanic law, as they were in the last period, but the general tendency of liberalizing religious regulations, as we observed has effected a change in the attitude towards the necessity of spiritual betterment for these groups And the newer method of religious worship is thrown open to them

The solidarity of a caste as a unit of social organization is more and more acknowledged It is the duty of the king to see that the various castes observe their own rules and regulations, and to bring back the erring members to their path of duty He has also to differentiate between different castes by appropriate marks of distinction [2] The king must inquire into the laws of castes before settling disputes When enacting any law he must see that the proposed law is not at variance with the customs of castes [3] Nārada recognizes the right of a member of a caste to succeed to the property of the deceased in case he has no near heirs entitled to succession [4] Yājñavalkya requires a suitor to mention his caste in his plaint [5] The solidarity of the Brahmin caste is very pronounced Members of the caste owe certain duties to fellow-members on certain occasions One of them is that of inviting certain neighbours of the caste to a dinner-party, at which twenty Brahmins are entertained [6]

What constitutes effective association between members of a group is important from the point of view of the development of caste Vishnu's views on association, though they govern the outcasts and the "mlecchas", are very much like the ideas that regulated social intercourse between caste and caste or between the members of a single caste in later times Sitting on the same bench, riding in the same carriage, lying on the same couch, or eating in the company of a person

[1] *Śukranīti*, p 164
[2] Yājñavalkya, p 218 Nārada, p 215 *Śukranīti*, p 164
[3] Manu, viii, 41, 46 *Śukranīti*, p 187
[4] Nārada, p 201
[5] Yājñavalkya, p 247
[6] Manu, viii, 392

proves such close relations that if a person happens to be an outcast, the person associating with him in the ways indicated above, becomes himself an outcast after a year One who habitually drinks water from or bathes in a pool situated in a foreign country reduces himself to the status of the inhabitant of that country [1] We can clearly recognize in these ideas, once they were applied to social behaviour, the potency to create, in course of time, newer and newer castes

Food offered by a Śūdra is generally forbidden to a Brahmin as in the last period, but with this difference that, in addition to the specifically privileged Śūdras, there is the class of the good Śūdras whose food may be accepted The general tenor of the detailed regulations leads us to believe that this permitted food was to be either uncooked or specially prepared in milk or ghee According to Vishnu, a member of the first three castes has to undergo a penance if he takes food offered by a carpenter, a blacksmith, a goldsmith, a dealer in molasses and other liquids, an oil-presser, a weaver, a dyer of cloths, a cane-worker, or a washerman The later distinction between food prepared without the addition of water and that in which water is used is mentioned by Atri He allows a Brahmin to accept from a Śūdra anything that is prepared in ghee and articles like milk, buttermilk, curds, etc Consistently with this distinction in food the same writer forbids a Brahmin to take water from a Śūdra The food offered even by a Kshatriya and a Vaiśya was not considered to be perfectly innocuous [2]

The origin of the later practice for members of different castes not to sit in the same row for taking meals must be discovered in an idea expressed by Angiras He opines that if, among persons taking their meals sitting in a row, one of them happens to have committed any sin, all the others share it This possibility of guilt can, however, be evaded by the interposition of doors, posts, ashes, and water [3]

We have already noticed that Vishnu enjoins the householders of the first three castes not to travel in the company of the Śūdras The reason for this injunction was that

[1] Vishnu, pp 133, 255
[2] Vishnu, pp 163, 164 *Collection of Smritis*, pp 3, 4, 16, 20, 122, 392
[3] *Collection of Smritis*, p 5

probably the Śūdra was considered to impart pollution by contact. As a matter of fact, according to the interpretation put by the commentator on another rule, the Śūdra's touch defiled objects like vehicles and seats and thus rendered them unfit for use unless water was sprinkled over them.[1] Angiras requires a Brahmin to sip water for purification if he comes in contact with a washerman, a leather-worker, a fisherman, or a cane worker. A Brahmin, drinking water from the vessel of a Chandāla, has to undergo the penance of living on cow's urine for a number of days. Nay, Laghusankha goes even further and prescribes this penance if a Brahmin happens to drink water from a well from which a Chandāla has drawn water. Samvarta's opinion is still more stringent inasmuch as he regards even running water as defiled, if it is used by the Antyajas or outcasts. Atri declares a washerman, a leather-worker, a cane-worker, a fisherman, and a Bhil to be Antyajas or outcasts. Vedavyāsa adds to this list several other castes. According to Usanas, the Chandāla was to enter a village for sweeping, etc., in the first half of the day, carrying a broom under his armpit and a small pot hanging at his neck.[2] These regulations remind one of Poona life in the days of the Peshwas.

The later theory of pollution by contact and its limits finds its first mention in Vrddhahārita who observes that the effect of contact is limited to three persons, the fourth person if touched being free. A regulation of Atri about touch-pollution fully breathes the later spirit. In sacrificial sessions, in religious and marriage processions, and on all festive occasions there is no question of untouchability.[3]

The traditional scheme of occupations of the four castes is laid down as usual, but with some modifications, quite in keeping with the changed attitude towards the status of some of these groups. Thus, Yājñavalkya allows a Śūdra, in case of necessity, to engage in trade, which was erstwhile regarded as the sole preserve of the Vaisyas.[4] Agriculture, again, in the opinion of some, was a proper occupation for the Śūdra. Further, it was more and more regarded as a suitable occupation for all castes.[5] Nevertheless, Manu, as

[1] Vishnu, p. 99.
[2] *Collection of Smritis*, pp. 1, 16, 18, 22, 46, 125–6, 357, 421.
[3] *Collection of Smritis*, pp. 20, 314.
[4] Yājñavalkya, p. 85.
[5] *Collection of Smritis*, pp. 173, 273. *Śukranīti*, p. 151.

usual, represents the more orthodox view Remarking that some regard agriculture as an excellent occupation, he contends that it is blameworthy because the plough injures the earth and the living organisms [1] There are indications that the ideal occupations prescribed for the four castes were not necessarily followed by them The Brahmins particularly seemed to have taken to many of the occupations that were either entirely forbidden to them or allowed only in straightened circumstances This is the only legitimate inference we can draw from the long lists of unholy Brahmins who must not be invited to a Śrāddha dinner [2] Chārudatta, a Brahmin by birth, is represented in the play "Mriccha-katika" as following the occupation of a Vaisya [3] That the occupation of the Kshatriya was often usurped by other castes is abundantly clear from the accounts of some of the ruling houses of this period Harshavardhana of Kanauj, by contemporary account, was a Vaisya,[4] while the Kadamba rulers of Banawasi were Brahmins [5]

We have seen above the reason advanced by Manu why agriculture should be regarded as an unworthy occupation for the Brahmin In regard to other occupations we do not know the grounds on which the status of an occupation was determined Yet there is no doubt that there was some defined scheme of status of different occupations which depended not so much on their lucrativeness as on their ceremonial purity Nārada distinguishes all work as either pure or impure, and mentions the following as impure work sweeping the gateway, the privy, and the road, rubbing the master's limbs, shampooing the secret parts, and gathering and putting away the leavings of food, ordure, and urine [6]

There is still permission for the three castes to marry outside their varna excepting from among the Śūdras But a wife of lower varna is declared to be unfit for the performance of religious rites

The number of new groups formed by unions between the members of the four castes, and by further intermarriages between these groups and so on, is no longer the limited

[1] Manu, x, 84 [2] Manu, iii 150–66
[3] *The Little Clay Cart*, translated by A W Ryder, 1905, pp 138, 151
[4] Vaidya, vol i, pp 61–2
[5] V A Smith, *The Oxford History of India*, 1923, p 199
[6] Nārada, pp 131–2

number that it was in the last period[1] With all this multiplicity, however, to each group is ascribed some more or less definite occupation It appears that in reality new occupational groups having the characteristics of castes had arisen, and the Brahmanic account of their origins was a mere theory based on permutations and combinations of the four original castes which bounded the Brahmins' mental horizon

That intercaste marriages were not absolutely out of vogue even to the end of the period under review is proved by epigraphical and other data But it seems that except in the case of a Brahmin marrying a Śūdra female the issue of such marriages were not singled out for special treatment, proper for a class different from that of the father or the mother It is recorded by a Chinese traveller that the daughter of King Harsha, who was a Vaisya, was married to a Kshatriya, and it does not appear that the children of the union were regarded as anything else than Kshatriyas[2] A Jodhpur inscription of the latter half of the ninth century mentions the case of a Brahmin, who had two wives, one of whom was a Kshatriya lady The children of this lady were classed as Kshatriyas[3] In the tenth century, Rājaśekhara, a Brahmin, took a Chahamāna lady to wife[4] An inscription from Bengal, belonging to the seventh century, describes a certain individual as "pārasava" and makes him the issue of a Brahmin father and a Śūdra mother, which is in conformity with rules of the sacred laws[5] Bāna, in his Harshacharita, also tells us that his father, a Brahmin, had a Śūdra wife besides a Brahmin one, and describes her issue as his "pārasava brothers"

The state of caste-organization as revealed by literature and the inscriptions of the fourth period is strikingly similar to that which we noticed as prevailing about the middle of the nineteenth century The leading authorities of this period are Parāsara, Hemādri, Mādhava, and Kamalākara The traditional account of the total extermination of the

[1] Manu, x, 8–40 *Collection of Smritis*, pp 46–8
[2] Vaidya, vol i, pp 61–2
[3] Quoted in R C Majumdar's *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, 1922, pp 372–3
[4] Vaidya, vol ii, p 180
[5] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol xv, pp 305, 310–11

Kshatriyas by Parasurāma, strengthened by their defection to Buddhism, had already given rise to the theory that the Kshatriya race had ceased to exist with the Nandas. The rout of the older Kshatriya families, caused by the inroads of the Hūnas, further lent support to this theory. Finally the rude shock that was given to Hindu sovereignty by the early Moslem conquerors so far convinced the Pandits of the extinction of the Kshatriyas that we find Kamalākara only grudgingly acknowledging their existence as a rare phenomenon.[1] This shadowy existence of the Kshatriyas rendered it unnecessary for the Brahmins, even if they wished it, to curtail their privileges excepting in very few particulars which touched the interests of the Brahmin caste. We, therefore, find the old scheme of four castes mentioned *in toto* in the literature of this period. Yet hypergamy is forbidden in favour of endogamy by Hemādri.[2] The use of spirituous drinks is sinful only for the Brahmin and not for the Kshatriya and the Vaisya as formerly. A Brahmin may take the food prepared either by a Kshatriya or a Vaisya in their own houses only on certain religious occasions, provided these persons have lived according to the sacred law.[3]

We have already noticed the progressive assimilation of the Vaisya with the Śūdra, and we find Kamalākara, the latest authority of this period, openly declaring that the Vaisyas are hardly known to exist in the Kali age. In the regulations of this period it is becoming more and more clear that writers on religion treat both the Vaisyas and the Śūdras as almost indistinguishable. The occupations prescribed by Parāsara, who is *par excellence* the mentor of the age, for both of them are the same, viz. agriculture, trade and crafts, with the usual addition of service of the Brahmins in the case of the Śūdras.[4] Vaisya's food is almost as much taboo to the Brahmin as that of the Śūdra.[5]

In the treatment of the Śūdras, it seems that the distinction made in the last period between sat and asat Śūdra was acted upon locally in Northern India, and did not appeal to writers on sacred law hailing from Southern India. To them a Śūdra was a Śūdra, and as such an untouchable, except

[1] *Śūdra Kamalākara*, p. 299 [2] Hemādri, vol. iii, pt. ii, p. 667
[3] Parāśara, vol. ii, pt. ii, pp. 78–9; vol. ii, pt. i, p. 410
[4] Parāsara, vol. i, pt. ii, pp. 15–16 [5] Hemādri, vol. iv, p. 382

in name Mādhava exhorts a Brahmin to avoid living in the same house with a Śūdra or accompanying him in a carriage Nor must he take food ordinarily cooked by him But food that is prepared in oily substance or in milk may be accepted, provided it is eaten not in the house of the Śūdra but on the banks of a river [1] Hemādri even goes further and impresses upon a Brahmin the sinfulness of eating one's food in a Śūdra's house though prepared by oneself with the raw materials supplied by the Śūdra [2] Even the food of the few privileged Śūdras that was formerly acceptable to the Brahmin is ruled out by Mādhava as a custom unsuited for the Kali age [3] So determined has the opposition to the Śūdra's food become, that Kamalākara is at pains to explain away ancient texts by all manner of fanciful interpretations [4]

In the field of religion the Śūdra has not only retained the rights that were conceded to him but finds them now ever more well-defined and codified beyond all cavil by Kamalākara, who even upholds his right to the use of the all-purifying mixture, "pañchagavya" [5] As already observed, this religious emancipation of the Śūdra does not by any means put him on an equal footing with the higher castes Even within the folds of new creeds like devotional Vaishnavism, where, perfect religious equality may, naturally, be expected, the Śūdra's inferiority is taken for granted and even acted upon It is precisely because Rāmānanda, one of the apostolic successors of Rāmānuja, the founder of perhaps the most catholic form of Vaishnavism, was insulted by his brethren for his social inferiority that he travelled northwards and established a new sect He asked his followers not to inquire about anyone's caste [6]

The religious upheaval in Mahārāshtra, which began about the beginning of the thirteenth century, produced considerable appreciation in the religious position of the Śūdra We have already seen that the Śūdra was exhorted to mutter the descriptive names of God for his salvation This method of spiritual betterment was gradually becoming an integral

[1] Parāśara, vol ii, pt ii, p 29, pt i, pp 410–11
[2] Hemādri, vol iv p 382 [3] Parāśara, vol i, pt i, p 136
[4] *Śūdra-Kamalākara,* p 279
[5] The five products of the cow, see above, p 86
[6] Hemachandra Raychaudhuri *Materials for the Study of the Early History of the Vaishnava Sect,* 1920, p 117 Nicol Macnicol, *Indian Theism,* 1915, p 115

part of the developing creeds of Śaivism and Vaishnavism About the beginning of this period or a little earlier, Nāmamāhātmya or the importance of muttering the names of God was freely acknowledged in the Brahmanic works In the period under review, there flourished in Mahārāshtra a number of Śūdras of outstanding personality They explored and perfected this easy method of salvation for the Śūdras The special method of preaching by means of peripatetic sermons delivered in temples with the accompaniment of some simple music was carried to perfection by two non-Brahmin saints, Nāmdev and Tukārām The traditional history written by Mahipati in the middle of the eighteenth century makes this quite clear Further, of the saints who contributed to the new religious forces a large majority was formed by the non-Brahmins Of the Brahmin saints, many cannot be regarded as being wholly in a direct line of this movement They still laid much emphasis on the philosophic aspect of religion Jñāneshwar with his brother and sister and Ekanāth seem to be the outstanding Brahmin saints who had the greatest sympathy with the new doctrine of salvation through the muttering of the names of God The former were the children of a Brahmin ascetic, returned to the living of a householder and as such much despised by the Brahmins Ekanāth ventured to feed the untouchables at a Śrāddha-dinner (dinner in honour of the manes) before the invited Brahmins had had their meals For this sacrilegious act, even though God had performed a miracle in favour of Ekanāth, the local Brahmins insisted on his undergoing a purificatory rite which Ekanāth duly performed Almost everywhere the Brahmins figured as opponents of the new movement which appeared to them to upset the good old Brahmanic way of salvation through proper rites and ceremonies and to undermine the system of caste [1] By their poetic ability, their capacity for religious experience, and by their pure life, these Śūdras impressed their contemporaries—irrespective of caste—so much so that they were enthroned as saints and adored by all These saints of Mahārāshtra produced a revolution without the uproar of a rebellion The Śūdra, who was accustomed to

[1] *Vide Bhaktavijaya*, by Mahipati (*Marathi*), edited by L B Gokhale, 1888

look upon it as a great privilege to be allowed to practise the Brahmanic rites, though only with the accompaniment of the Puranic mantras, now produced individuals who struck out a new path and established themselves as teachers And the Brahmin, who was doubtful whether a Śūdra was even capable of profiting by his religious teachings, had to accept some of these Śūdras as his religious masters Devotional schools of religious sects produced a more or less similar change in the other parts of India

These Śūdra saints, though they exploited the easy method of salvation and thus freed the Śūdras from the Brahmanic domination in their spiritual life, upheld the old order of the four castes including their own status of inferiority in the scheme There was another contemporary movement which proclaimed a wholesale revolt against caste It was the sect of the Mānbhāvas [1] It proved to be an unsuccessful attempt, giving rise to a new caste The followers of this sect were contemptuously treated and even bitterly hated by all classes of the population

In the treatment of the outcast section of the society this period witnesses a development which is in keeping with the ideas of ceremonial purity Untouchability is graded according to the supposed impurity of the object A Brahmin should keep a distance of one yuga, two, three, and four yugas between himself and a degraded person, a woman in her period, a parturient woman, and a Chandāla respectively in order that he may not catch pollution from them [2]

In the sphere of religion the lot of these people is sought to be improved for the first time in the history of Hinduism It was Rāmānuja, the Brahmin, who took bold steps for the religious betterment of these people He secured for them the privilege of visiting the temple one day in the year and devised something which they might put on corresponding to the sacred thread of the Brahmins [3]

In Mahārāshtra and other parts of India also the untouchables produced some saints who were not only adored by their own caste but in course of time came to be highly respected by all

[1] V L Bhawe, *Maharashtra Saraswat (Marathi)*, vol i, pp 70–2
[2] Parāśara, vol ii, pt ii, p 88
[3] J N Farquhar, *Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, 1920, pp 244–5

The traditional assignment of occupations to the four castes is very largely modified We have already noticed that the Vaisyas and the Śūdras are given common occupations, viz trade, agriculture, and crafts The Brahmin is allowed to live on agriculture provided he employs Śūdra labourers to do the actual work Mādhava candidly observes that it is not possible in the Kali age for the Brahmin to maintain himself on sacrificial fees The economic aspect seems to have affected the writer to such an extent that he allows all the four varnas to trade and practise crafts [1] The ancient profession of the Kshatriyas we find taken up by other castes as well It is well known that the Peshwa rulers of Poona were Brahmins The Chera, Chola, and Pandya kings belonged to the caste of the Vellalas,[2] a cultivating caste of Madras The Nayak kings of Madura and Tanjore were Balijas, traders by caste [3] In some parts even the aboriginal races ruled over petty principalities The Gonds provide perhaps the best example [4] The occupational diversity was far greater than the one contemplated in the old scheme and is frankly recognized both by Mādhava and Kamalākara in their treatment of mixed marriages

As regards the regulations of marriage, the four castes and the other groups are regarded as completely endogamous units, hypergamy being positively discouraged The list of groups considered to have been the result of mixed unions becomes very large and includes almost all the groups, occupational or otherwise, known to the authors, as behaving like unit castes Kamalākara's list, for example, includes such groups as Kolhati or Bahurupi, Kandu, Sali, Mochi, Burud, Ghasi, and others [5] Mādhava tries to explain the origins only of about sixty groups and characteristically observes, "Innumerable are the caste-like groups that are produced by miscegenation" [6] It is clear that whatever element of reality this theory of the origins of the numerous caste-like groups, besides the four ancient castes, possessed at the outset, by now it was merely a hypothetical explanation of the increasing caste-groups in the society The Brahmin

[1] Parāśara, vol i, pt ii, pp 3–5, 15–16
[2] Kanakasabhai, p 113
[3] *Madras Census*, 1901, p 144
[4] *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol x, p 13
[5] *Śūdrakamalākara*, pp 289–92
[6] Parāśara, vol i, pt ii, p 125

writers could not rid themselves of the idea of the four original castes To them numerous further groups could have been only produced as a result of unions between the members of the four castes, just as these latter were created from the body of the Supreme Being In fact, this is the Brahmanical theory of the origins of the numerous castes Mādhava makes a frank and rare admission that the practices and regulations about the four castes have been changing from age to age [1]

Caste, as a group, comprised within a larger class and with no necessary connection with occupation, is contemplated by the commentators and Nibandha-writers of this period According to them, out of the many tribunals designed for justice one consisted of persons living in the same place, following different occupations, and belonging to different castes, while another consisted of people carrying on one type of occupation but belonging to different castes [2] Nilakantha explains a regulation of Yājñavalkya about witnesses to mean that they shall be according to the caste and varna of the litigants If the castes of the parties differ, then witnesses belonging to the varna in which the castes are comprised should be called in [3]

Thus by the end of this period we visualize the caste-organization, as revealed in the literature of the period, to be not at all different in any essential point from the one which we described as prevailing in the middle of the nineteenth century Perhaps it may be contended that there is not the same multiplicity of groups described in this literature We have opined that the theory of mixed castes, as expanded by the contemporary writers, marks the numerous groups that had come into existence Now we propose to present some data from the inscriptions and travellers' accounts bearing on the names and the variety of contemporary groups which corroborate our view

In a Prakrit inscription of an early date of the Brahmanic king Śivaskandavarman of Kānchi are mentioned "Vallave" (herdsman) and "Govallave" (cow-herdsman) [4] In an

[1] Ibid, pt i, p 139

[2] *Vyavahāra Mayūkha* (Kane's edition, 1926), pp 5, 215, compare also Medhātithi's comment on Manu, viii, p 219

[3] *Vyavahāra Mayūkha*, loc cit, notes, p 69

[4] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol i, p 5

inscription of the tenth century from Lalitpur district, occur the following names of professions or castes in combination with the proper names of individuals "Vanika" (merchant), "Nemakavanika" (salt-merchant), "Tāmbūlika" (betel-seller) and "Sūtradhāra" (carpenter) In the same place is mentioned the shop of a brazier (Kamsara) and that of a Brahmin betel-seller [1] In a South Indian inscription the boundaries of a particular piece of land are fixed in reference to the lands of a blacksmith (Karumān) [2] In other inscriptions we have references to individuals as the "Vellālan" (cultivator) So-and-so or of such and such locality [3] Ilavas (toddy-tappers) are referred to in another inscription [4] In the ancient city of Conjeevaram certain quarters were mostly inhabited by weavers, "who were patronized by the king and consisted of two sections of Pattasalins," which correspond with the identical divisions of the present day Saliyans (weavers) of Madras [5] Venkayya has observed that many names of individuals occurring in some of the South Indian inscriptions have as their second portions names of "profession or caste to which the individual belonged, with a complimentary epithet, the whole title meaning 'the great dancing master carpenter, goldsmith, brazier, Brāhmana, etc, of the king' whose name is prefixed to the title" [6]

A "Gaudakaranika" (writer from the Gauda country) is mentioned in a North Indian inscription of the end of the tenth century [7] In an inscription from Dharwar District belonging to the eleventh century occurs a clear reference to the division of the non-Brahmin castes of Madras into those of the right hand and those of the left [8] Another reference to this well-known but not properly understood distinction occurs in a Madras inscription of about the same time [9] Another inscription mentions some persons who refer to themselves as Śiva-Brāhmanas [10] Kanmālar (artisans

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol i, pp 173–7
[2] *South Indian Inscriptions*, vol iii, p 106
[3] Ibid, pp 21 and 253
[4] Ibid, p 437 [5] Ibid, p 268
[6] *Archæological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1906–7, p 243, f n 5
[7] *Epigraphia Indica* vol i, pp 77, 85
[8] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol xv, p 81
[9] *South Indian Inscriptions*, vol iii, pp 114–17
[10] Ibid, pp 470–1

of Madras) are allowed certain rights, which were evidently not enjoyed by them previously They may blow double conchs and drums at their marriages and funerals, they may wear sandals, and cover their houses with plaster[1] In an inscription from Chingleput District, ascribed to the middle of the twelfth century, a witness to a document refers to himself as " I, the carpenter So and-so, who possesses the better half of the land of the carpenters in the village "[2] Nagar Brahmins are mentioned in an inscription from Gujarat belonging to the middle of the twelfth century An inscription from Orissa, ascribed to the end of the twelfth century, mentions a class of Radhiya Brahmins[3] Maga or Sakadvipiya Brahmins were known as such about the same time[4] Jaina inscriptions from Mount Abu of the first and second quarters of the thirteenth century mention the following castes Pragvata, Dharkatta, Shrimala, Oswala, Modha, and also Guguli Brahmins, who are found at present chiefly at Dwaraka[5] Two Maudgala Brahmins are mentioned in one inscription of A D 1240 as ministers of one of the Yādava kings They also served their master in military capacity[6] A family of Kayastha race, whose occupation is that of writing, is referred to in a North Indian inscription belonging to the end of the thirteenth century Some members of this family distinguished themselves as warriors, while one was the governor of a fort[7] A " Mochi " (shoemaker) founded a temple of Vishnu at Raipur in the Central Provinces in about A D 1415[8] In a Sanskrit inscription at Chitorgarh belonging to about A D 1429, the composer of the eulogy described himself as the son of one Vishnu Bhatt of the Dasapura caste[9]

Duarte Barbosa speaks of eighteen castes in Malabar, each with customs and idol-worship of their own The Brahmins serve the kings in almost any respectable capacity but in arms Some of them even act as courtiers Though the main occupation of the Tiyans is that of tapping toddy yet many of them are found as quarrymen, as soldiers, and even

[1] Ibid, p 47 [2] Ibid, p 82
[3] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol i, pp 296, 303, 304, vol vi, p 203, and f n 3
[4] Ibid, vol ii, p 331
Ibid, vol viii, pp 206, 208
[6] *Archaeological Survey of Western India Report*, vol iii, p 86
[7] *Epigraphia Indica*, vol i, pp 331–8, 336
[8] Ibid vol ii, p 229
[9] Ibid, vol ii, pp 409, 420

as agrestic serfs [1] Domingos Paes tells us that there were many Brahmins in the service of the King of Vijayanagar as officers of the towns and cities, while others lived by trade or cultivation [2] Abul Fazal remarks that the Vaisya and the Śūdra are divided into numerous branches He actually mentions the following castes Kayasth, Bhar, Bachgoti, Chandel, Chauhan, Gaharwal, Gautami, Ghelot, Kausik, and Raghubansi evidently as sub-divisions among the Rajputs, Ahir, Lodh, Gujar, Kurmi, Bagri, Mina, Meo, Mehtar, Bhil, Koli, Gwalia, Garasiah, Khasia, Baoriya, Bisen, Bais, Khand, and Khari, a division of the Gaud Kayasths [3] Moreland rightly summarizes the position of caste at the end of Akbar's reign in the following words "Among the Hindus the caste system existed substantially as it exists to-day and the differences among castes and races were such that we find travellers speaking of Baniyas or of Gujaratis as 'nations' distinct from Brahmans or Rajputs" [4] In the time of Jehangir, the Baniyas of Gujarat had numerous sub-divisions neither of which would eat nor drink with others [5] Hamilton, in the middle of the eighteenth century, mentions sixty-five divisions of the Baniyas of Surat [6]

[1] *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, by M Longworth Dames, vol ii, 1921, pp 7, 87, 60

[2] R Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, ed 1924, p 245

[3] *Ain i Akbari*, translated by Jarrett, vol iii, 1894, p 118, and vol ii, pp 129, 131, 161, 162–3, 164–8, 177, 182, 184, 187, 189, 191, 198, 204–5, 255, 290

[4] *India at the Death of Akbar*, 1920, p 23

[5] *Jehangir's India*, by Moreland and Geyl, 1925, p 76

[6] *A new account of the East Indies*, by Capt Alexander Hamilton, vol i, 1740, p 151

CHAPTER V

RACE AND CASTE[1]

CASTE is such an obtrusive factor of Indian social organization that since the time of Megasthenes it has never failed to attract the attention of the foreigner—be he traveller, administrator, or student of Sanskrit literature The application of the sociological method to the explanation of caste, i e a systematic attempt to elucidate the genesis and growth of the institution of caste, by a comprehensive study of the contemporary castes, however, may be said to begin with the works of Denzil Ibbetson and J C Nesfield Both of them, in general, endorse the view[2] that caste is mainly occupational in origin, i e occupations which were organized into guilds slowly became exclusive and stratified into castes Nesfield went further and, affirming the essential unity of the Indian race, emphatically denied that racial distinction was the basis of caste[3] This extraordinary statement of Nesfield led Herbert Risley to use anthropometry for a solution of the riddle of caste, for that alone could decide questions of racial affinity[4] He carried on extensive measurements on many of the castes of Northern India and published the results of his splendid work in two volumes entitled *Anthropometric Data from Bengal* (1891) The bearing of these data on the theory of caste he discussed in the introduction to his *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, and later on in *The People of India* His work further led to a succession of monographs on the anthropometric data from other Indian Provinces as a part of the ethnographic survey of India

In any anthropometric work the student is, at the very outset, faced by two problems The first is the question of the unit What shall we take as a unit on which measurements may be taken and compared ? Shall we take a geographical or political area as our unit and compare one with

[1] This chapter is an adaptation of the author's paper "The Ethnic Theory of Caste", published in *Man in India*, 1924

[2] Risley, (2), pp 263–5 [3] Ibid, p 265 [4] Ibid, p 20

another ? Or shall we take a whole people, and take our measurements on them and then analyse them ? The solution of this problem is fundamental to anthropometric work But as our main purpose is to institute comparisons between castes this problem need not engage us here We may take one caste as a unit and compare it with another This procedure does not involve the acceptance of Risley's view about the isolation of castes which, as pointed out by his learned annotator, W Crooke,[1] requires much modification We may thus take our measurements on Brahmins and compare them with those on Chamars But the data show us that neither Brahmins nor Chamars among themselves have a uniform physical type We ask ourselves the reason of this, and we are led to the question of the origins of the different physical types Thus we have to deal with the general ethnology of India as, indeed, Herbert Risley did We have to analyse racial mixture as well as compare different castes

This procedure opens up the second problem, viz what is the method by which we can detect racial affinities and compare groups ? For such comparisons the average has long been in use Risley principally used the average for his work, rarely bringing in the seriations and still more rarely the absolute measurements [2] Seriations, like the frequency curve, only serve the purpose of showing the actual distribution and cannot be conveniently used for purposes of comparison, a fact which explains the rare use of these by Risley when dealing with the types, though they are given in the appendices The average without the standard deviation is an abstraction which tells us almost nothing The standard deviation is very useful both as serving the basis of the formula that we have utilized for comparison, as well as giving us an idea of the actual range of variation "A range of six times the standard deviation usually includes 99 per cent or more of all the observations in the case of distributions of the symmetrical or moderately asymmetrical type" [3] We have therefore given in the appendix the means and their standard deviations for selected castes

[1] Ibid , p xvii [2] Op cit , p 37
[3] Yule, *An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics*, 1916, p 40

It will be observed that for the Punjab and Gujarat we have very meagre data for Sindh proper we have none For Madras, Mr E Thurston [1] has given us a long list of averages but very few individual measurements Hence in the case of Dravidian India we can compare only two castes, data for which are taken from the paper of Sir Thomas Holland Though we accept Thurston's averages for the general ethnology of India, yet we must point out that they are very crude in so far as the absolute measurements seem to have been recorded in centimetres [2] For more scientific conclusions about Dravidian India we require fresh measurements taken on typical Dravidian castes

When we compare two groups, what we want to know is not merely the differences between the two groups as regards the cephalic index or nasal index separately, but we want an expression which conveniently sums up all the differences in the various attributes that we may like to compare Such an expression was used by Mr T A Joyce in 1912 In order to compare two groups he starts with one character, say, the cephalic index, and works out the fraction $\frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\sigma_1^2 + \sigma_2^2}}$ where M_1 and M_2 are the means for the cephalic indices of the two groups, $M_1 - M_2$ is their difference without regard to sign, and σ_1, σ_2 are the standard deviations Similar fractions are found for as many characters as one likes, and all of them are added together This sum is called the "Differential Index" [3] The expression is a convenient quantity showing the actual differentiation of two peoples and can be fruitfully used for comparisons Another great advantage of this expression is that by its help we can include for comparison absolutes like the cephalic length, which have, unfortunately, been too much neglected in anthropological work Further this item is of special importance in the field of Indian ethnology, for here we have sometimes to deal with two dolichocephalic peoples whose absolute measurements of the head are essentially different Thus the Chamar of the United Provinces has a cephalic index of 72 90, while his cephalic length and cephalic breadth are 185 18 and 134 9 respectively The corresponding figures for the Chhatri of the same province are 73 12, 188 35, 137 68 We have

[1] Vol i, p xi [2] Ibid, pp lv, lxi [3] *JRAI*, 1912, p 451

given in the appendix the differential indices for selected castes In this chapter we have attempted to attack the problem of caste with the help of this index

We have said above that it was Risley who, under special circumstances, applied anthropometry to the solution of the problem of caste But owing to the method which he followed, the light he was able to throw on the subject was not as decisive as was expected Again he devoted more attention to the classification and origins of the various physical types of India than to the problem of caste proper

It may be taken to be an historical fact that peoples calling themselves "Ārya" poured into India through the north-west somewhere about 2000 B C It is equally clear from our discussion that an institution closely akin to caste has been very often described in Sanskrit books, which are the works of either the Aryans or the Aryan-inspired aborigines Can we trace a close connection between the immigration of the Aryans and the rise of the institution of caste? We have seen that the Brahmins, who were the moral guides and legislators of the immigrant Aryans, tried to keep their blood free from any intermixture with the lower classes, though they had no objection to the members of their own class having progeny from females of lower classes, provided these were not admitted into the Brahmin class Can anthropometry shed any light on this aspect of caste? It appears to us that anthropometry will furnish us with a good guide, provided certain assumptions about the physical types of the Indo-Aryans and of the aborigines of Hindustan can be plausibly made

These assumptions are two First, that the Aryan type may be described as long-headed and fine-nosed The average cephalic index may be said to vary between 70 and 75 and the nasal index from 65 to 75 The ground for this assumption is that almost all the averages of the cephalic index and the nasal index given by Risley [1] for the castes of the Punjab and Rajputana fall within these ranges, and these are the regions which, from their geographical position, must have been the home of Aryan settlements We may reasonably hold, therefore, that the predominant physical type of the Punjab and Rajputana represents the Aryan type The second assumption is that the aboriginal

[1] Op cit, Appendix, iii, p 396

type may be deduced from such peoples as the Musahar, who, not being within the pale of Hinduism, are like the jungle-tribes of Southern India. Their chief characteristic is the broad nose, the nasal index being above 80. Very often the head is long. The broad nose seems to have been noticed even by the Vedic poets as a characteristic of the aborigines, whom they sometimes describe as "noseless".[1]

We can now proceed to set out the conclusions we get from our anthropometrical inquiry. Taking the Brahmin of the United Provinces as the typical representative of the ancient Aryans we shall start comparisons with him. If we turn to the table of differential indices we find that he shows a smaller differential index[2] as compared with the Chuhra and the Khatri of the Punjab than with any caste from the United Provinces except the Chhatri. The differential index between the Khatri and the Chuhra is only slightly less than that between the Brahmin of the United Provinces and the Chuhra. This means that the Brahmin of the United Provinces has closer physical affinities with the Chuhra and the Khatri of the Punjab than with any caste from his own province except the very high caste of the Chhatri. The Brahmin is as much akin to the Chuhra as the latter is to the Khatri of the Punjab. The only valid conclusion is that the United Provinces Brahmin does not materially differ from the physical type of the Punjab, i.e. on the assumption, previously explained, that he fairly represents the physical type of the Aryans. The reality of this close affinity between the United Provinces Brahmin and the Punjab Chuhra is more clearly brought out if we look at the table of differential indices between the United Provinces Brahmin and the Brahmins of other regions. They are very high as compared with that between the Chuhra and the United Provinces Brahmin. Even the differential index between the United Provinces Brahmin and the Bihar Brahmin, who from what we know about the history of the spread of Aryan culture, is expected to be very nearly allied to the former, is just twice as high as that between the United Provinces Brahmin and the Chuhra. This ought to serve

[1] *Vedic Index*, *vide* Dasyu.

[2] We have used only those differential indices which are based on six characters.

as a conclusive proof of the fact that the United Provinces Brahmin has essentially retained the same physical type as that of the Punjabis and of the ancient Aryans

We must now examine in what relation the United Province Brahmin stands to the other castes of his province From the table of differential indices for the United Provinces we see that in physical affinity with the Brahmin, the Kayasth and the Kurmi stand next to the Chuhra, while at the other end of the scale come the Pasi and the Chamar In the scheme of social precedence, the Kayasth belongs to the fourth rank, the Kurmi stands at the head of the eighth, while the Pasi and the Chamar take the eleventh and the twelfth rank [1]

The true significance of this gradation in physical affinity with the Brahmin can be demonstrated by the study of the other provinces On historical grounds we expect Bihar to approximate to the United Provinces On referring to the table we find that the Kurmi comes near to the Brahmin, and the Chamar and the Dom stand much differentiated from him But the Chamar in this case is not as much distinct from the Brahmin as the United Provinces Chamar is from the United Provinces Brahmin The social status of the Kurmi is defined by stating that he ranks third while the Chamar and the Dom rank fifth and sixth [2] Thus in Bihar the state of affairs in some way corresponds to that which we have tried to demonstrate for the United Provinces The table for Bengal shows that identical conditions do not prevail there The Chandal, who stands sixth in the scheme of social precedence and whose touch pollutes,[3] is not much differentiated from the Brahmin, from whom the Kayasth, second in rank, can hardly be said to be distinguished The gradation observed in the United Provinces is thus absent in Bengal Still more is this the case in Bombay Here the Deshasth Brahmin bears as close an affinity to the Son Koli, a fisherman caste, as to his own compeer, the Chitpavan Brahmin The Mahar, the untouchable of the Maratha region, comes next together with the Kunbi, the peasant Then follow in order the Shenvi Brahmin, the Nagar Brahmin and the high-caste Maratha These results are rather odd

[1] *United Provinces Census Report*, 1901, p 248
[2] *Bengal Census Report*, 1901, pp 373 [3] Ibid, p 369

Stated in a generalized form they mean that there is no correspondence between social gradation and physical differentiation in Bombay We venture to think that the results from Bengal would have been equally striking if we had data for the various sub-castes of the Brahmins This contention is rendered plausible by some measurements published by Rai Bahadur Ramaprasad Chanda[1] The following are the means and their standard deviations —

	Cephalic Index		*Nasal Index*	
	m	St Dev	m	St Dev
Brahmin (31)	78 84	3 64	75 61	10 31
Paschatya Vaidik Brahmin (50)	79 83	3 56	71 97	8 62

With such differences between the two sub castes of the Brahmins of Bengal we have reason to expect more startling results than we have, though these are quite insignificant

Our survey of the regions of India other than Hindustan has made it abundantly clear that Hindustan is unique in this respect that here we have the Brahmin at the head of the physical hierarchy, then follows a high caste or two, hardly differing from him in physical type, then comes a group of castes, slightly differentiated from the Brahmin, low castes like the Chamar and the Pasi, whom we may look upon as the Hinduized representatives of the aborigines, stand far removed from him This is just the situation that should have resulted from the regulations, which, as we have shown above, were being promulgated by the Brahmins to avoid their class being contaminated by the infusion of the aboriginal blood The evidence from literature is thus amply corroborated by the physical facts Restrictions on marriage of a fundamentally endogamous nature were thus racial in origin

We shall now turn to the conclusions arrived at by Risley Believing in the "marked divergence of type that distinguishes the people of the Eastern Punjab from the people of Western Hindustan", to account for the people of Hindustan he brings in a second wave of the Aryans with few or no women They married aboriginal women and thus modified their original type, "but a certain pride

[1] pp 255–7

of blood remained to them, and when they had bred females enough to serve their purposes and to establish a distinct *jus connubii* they closed their ranks to all further intermixture of blood When they did this, they became a caste like the castes of the present day "[1] We have tried to indicate that as far as the published data go the Hindustani Brahmin does not materially differ from the physical type of the Punjabis An acute observer of Upper India, W Crooke remarked that a traveller from the Punjab glides into Hindustan without marking any change in the physical type[2] It is, therefore, not necessary to postulate a second invasion of the Aryans, who could not bring their women-folk with them[3] Nor need we propose a theory entirely contradictory to the literary records of the Brahmins

There is another proposition of Risley's which we must examine more minutely, for it is one which, if true to facts, affects our conclusion He observes, "If we take a series of castes in Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, or Madras, and arrange them in the order of the average nasal index so that the caste with the finest nose shall be at the top, and that with the coarsest at the bottom of the list, it will be found that this order substantially corresponds with the accepted order of social precedence "[4] In the argument elaborated above it is evident that we depend upon the uniqueness of Hindustan amongst the provinces of India as regards the gradation of the physical type for our explanation of the origin of endogamy The statement of Risley in a way challenges that basis For Bengal and Bombay we think we have made a good case, and our figures will speak for themselves, but as regards Madras, for lack of material, we have not been able to apply the formula for differential index It may be urged against us that as far as nasal index, without the absolute measurements of the nose, can be an indication of racial mixture, Madras seriously damages our argument We shall therefore examine the association between nasal index and social status province by province

Risley, after comparing the nasal indices of some of the

[1] (2), pp 56, 274–5 [2] *Northern India*, 1907, p 107

[3] The hypothesis of two or three Aryan inroads has been examined by the author in his paper "The Ethnic Theory of Caste", published in *Man in India*, 1924 [4] Op cit, p 29

castes of Hindustan, says that the order of gradation established by means of the nasal index is ' substantially " the same as that of social precedence [1] This mild statement has been reproduced in an exaggerated form in an authoritative book on ethnology It is said in Keane's *Man Past and Present* [2] that the Hindustani type of the United Provinces has " a nose index exactly corresponding to social station " We shall presently show that Risley's statement is only partially true, and that Keane's generalization has no ground The following is the order in which some of the typical castes of the United Provinces stand according to their nasal index as given in our table for the province Babhan, Brahmin, Chhatri, Kayasth, Kurmi, Tharu, Bania, Bhar, Kol, Lohar, Dom, Pasi, Musahar and Chamar The order of social precedence as given in the Census Report of 1901 [3] is as follows Brahmin, Babhan, Rajput, Kayasth, Bania, Kurmi and Lohar, Mallah and Bind, etc , Bhar and Tharu, etc , Kol and Muchi, etc , Pasi and Dosadh, etc , Chamar, Musahar and Dom, etc To these we may add Kachhi, Lodha, and Koiri Risley's [4] averages for these are 82 9, 83 4, and 83 6 In our list the first two will rank after Kol and the third after Lohar But in the scheme of social precedence they are grouped together with Kurmi These comparisons prove that the statement of Keane is baseless and that of Risley is true only in a broad sense For Bengal Risley's [5] averages give us the following order Brahmin of Eastern Bengal and Kayasth, Brahmin of Western Bengal, Chandal and Sadgop, Goala, Muchi, Pod, Kaibart, and Rajbansi Kochh These castes may be arranged according to social status as Brahmin, Kayasth and others, Sadgop and others, Kaibarta and Goala, Bhuiya and others, Kochh, and Pod, Chandal, Muchi and others [6] It is evident that these lists disprove Risley's statement From Risley's [7] averages for Orissa some of the castes rank as below Shashan Brahmin, Panda Brahmin and Teli, Khandait, Mastan Brahmin and Guria, and Chasa, Karan, Pan, Kewat, and Bauri The social order of precedence is Brahmin, Karan, Khandait and others, Chasa, Guria and others, Gola and others, Teli and

[1] Op cit , p 40
[2] p 546
[3] p 248
[4] Op cit , p 400
[5] p 401
[6] *Bengal Census Report*, 1901, p 369
[7] Op cit , p 401

Kewat, etc , Chamar, Bauri and others, Pan and others [1] We leave out Bombay, as it is not included in Risley's observation By looking at the table the reader can satisfy himself that the figures for Bombay are more telling than in the case of the provinces so far dealt with Finally we come to Madras Here we must treat of the different linguistic areas separately for the schemes of social precedence in the various areas are different We shall begin with the Telugu region According to the averages given by Risley (p 398) and by E Thurston (vol i, pp lxviii–lxxiii) the order of castes is as follows Kapu, Sale, Golla, Mala, Madiga and Togata, and Komati According to their social status they are ranked as below Brahmin Komati, Golla and Kapu and others, and Sale, Togata and others Mala and Madiga occupy the lowest rank, being the Pariahs of the Telugu country [2] In the Canarese region the nasal index gives the following order Karnatak Smarta Brahmin, Bant, Billava, Mandya Brahmin, Vakkaliga, Ganiga, Linga-Banajiga, Panchala, Kuruba, Holeya, Deshasth Brahmin, Toreya, and Bedar In the scheme of social precedence the castes take the ranks as under Brahmin Bant and Vakkaliga, Toreya, etc , Kuruba and Ganiga, Badaga and Kurumba and Solaga, Billava, Bedar and Holeya [3] The significance of the comparison is enhanced when we remember that the nasal index of the Holeya, the untouchable of the Canarese region, is 75 1, that of the highest sub-caste of the Brahmin being 71 5, while those of the jungle Kurumba and the Solaga, who when Hinduized, occupy the rank allotted to them in the list, are 86 1 and 85 1 respectively The ranks of the Linga-Banajiga and the Panchala cannot be determined, as they do not recognize the authority of the Brahmin The Tamil castes may be arranged according to their nasal index as follows Ambattan, Vellal, Idaiyan, Agamudaiyan, Tamil Brahmin, Palli, Malaiyali, Shanan, Paraiyan, Irula, and Malasar The social status of these castes is Brahmin, Idaiyan and Vellala, Agamudaiyan and Palli, Ambattan and others, Irula and Malasar and Malaiyali, Shanan and others, Paraiyan [4] The nasal indices of four typical Malayalam

[1] *Bengal Census Report*, 1901, p 375
[2] *Madras Census Report*, 1901, pp 136–7
[3] Ibid , pp 136–9 [4] Ibid , p 31

castes are Tiyan, 75, Nambudiri Brahmin, 75 5[1], Nayar, 76 7, Cheruman, 77 2 The order of social precedence among these is Nambudiri, Nayar, Tiyan, and Cheruman The nasal index of the Kanikar, a jungle tribe of Travancore, is 84 6 Thus the Cheruman belongs to the same race as the Brahmin rather than to that of the Kanikar We hope that these comparisons will have made it abundantly clear that the proposition of Risley has almost no basis in fact outside Hindustan

Outside Hindustan in each of the linguistic areas we find that the physical type of the population is mixed, and does not conform in its gradation to the scale of social precedence of the various castes The Brahmin is not so far distinguished in his physical features from other castes as to stand out apart from them and at the head of the physical hierarchy Some of the castes, very low in their social status, actually stand higher in physical features than some of the higher castes In Hindustan, on the other hand, the gradation of physical types from the Brahmin downwards to Musahar corresponds very closely to the scheme of social precedence prevailing among the Hindustani castes This state of things can be the result only of such regulations that prevented the possibility of Brahmin blood being mixed with aboriginal blood but allowed the mixture of blood of the other groups in varying proportions As we have seen, this was just what the Brahmins attempted to do by their rules of conduct The Brahmin kept himself pure by decreeing that only those persons both of whose parents were Brahmins were to be regarded as Brahmins Thus the Brahmins were the first to be endogamous with reference to their class We have also seen that the Brahmins of each of the linguistic areas show greater physical affinity with other castes of their region than with the Brahmins of other areas and of Hindustan It is clear from this that the Brahmanic practice of endogamy must have been developed in Hindustan and thence conveyed as a cultural trait to the other areas without a large influx of the physical type of the Hindustani Brahmins

The treatment of the subject cannot be complete without an investigation of the physical types of India and their

[1] Rivers, *The Todas*, p 708

origins [1] In this field also a lead has been given by Risley It is best to start with a statement of his view He distinguishes seven types (1) The Turko-Iranian of Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Provinces We do not discuss this type, because we think that it essentially lies outside cultural India (2) The Indo Aryan type of Kashmir, Punjab, and Rajputana It is dolichocephalic with a narrow nose We leave out other physical characteristics as they are far too vague (3) The Mongoloid type of the Himalayas, Nepal, Assam, and Burma (4) The Dravidian type extending from Ceylon to the valley of the Ganges and pervading the whole of Madras, Hyderabad, and the Central Provinces, most of Central India and Chhota-Nagpur It was " probably the original type of the population of India " It is dolichocephalic with a " very broad nose " (5) The Aryo Dravidian type of the United Provinces, Bihar and Ceylon It is also found in parts of Rajputana The head form is long with a tendency to medium (6) The Mongolo-Dravidian type of Lower Bengal and Orissa " The head is broad, nose medium with a tendency to broad " (7) The Scytho-Dravidian type of Western India ' The head is broad, nose moderately fine " [2]

The Indo-Aryan type The first objection against this type is that the term used to denote it in the scheme proposed by Risley is unsatisfactory In the case of the other types the names are compound terms composed of the names for the two physical types from which the particular type is supposed to be derived Thus what is meant by the term Aryo-Dravidian is that the type is considered to be a mixture of the Aryan type and the Dravidian type But in the case of the Indo Aryan type no such mixture is meant The Indo-Aryan type is not to be understood to be a mixture of the Indian and Aryan but to be a pure type Indo-Aryan means nothing more than the Aryan of India as opposed to the Aryan of Iran Thus it will be seen that in Risley's scheme the term is rather misleading Nevertheless, as in our treatment of the subject we wish to avoid all compound terms we shall retain the term Indo-Aryan to denote the Aryan type of India Instead we cannot use the term Aryan,

[1] In our discussion of the physical types we have confined our remarks to the Hindu population

[2] Risley, (2), pp 33–4

for in philology it is generally applied to the Iranians as well as the Indians By Indo Aryan, then, we mean the physical type to which the Vedic Indians largely contributed The physical characteristics of this type are solely inferred from those of the present population of the Punjab We have no reason to think that after the Aryan immigration into India and before Darius' dominion there was any considerable influx of foreigners When Darius held sway over a part of the Punjab the country appears to have been already very populous and prosperous [1] The physical type of the Punjab is so uniform as to preclude any possibility of large mixture Hence we can reasonably assume that a large bulk of the present inhabitants of the Punjab are the descendants of the Vedic Aryans Their number might have swollen by later immigrants whose physical type must have been similar to theirs but whose cultural affinities we may not be able to trace Secondly, an objection has been levelled at Risley's classification of the Rajputs as Indo-Aryans [2] It has been contended that some of the clan-names of the Rajputs are the same as those of the Gurjara tribe or caste and that the reigning dynasty of Kanauj during the ninth century and after was of the Gurjara stock Hence it is argued that some of the Rajput clans are of non-Aryan descent [3] Even the Minas and Meos of Rajputana are not physically much differentiated from the Rajputs [4] The Rajputs are thus of the same race as the other peoples of Rajputana We cannot hold that Rajputana was untenanted before the foreign tribes entered it in the sixth century A D Perhaps it will be said that the Gurjaras were of the same physical type as the population of Rajputana and hence their presence cannot be detected by physical anthropology, though they had come in large numbers and produced the present population of Rajputana This supposition is not tenable, for the Gurjaras are believed to be allied in blood to the White Huns,[5] who seem to have been a brachycephalic people [6] It is reasonable therefore to assume that a few ruling families of the Gujaras with a small band of followers succeeded in gaining ascendance and imposing their culture

[1] *Cambridge History of India*, vol i, pp 335–7 [2] Risley, p xx
[3] V A Smith, *Early History of India*, 1914, pp 411–14
[4] Risley, p 396 [5] Smith, op cit, p 321 [6] Keane, p 326

over the then population of Rajputana It is also urged that some of the Rajput clans are descended from the so-called aboriginal tribes—Gonds, Bhars, Kols and the like'[1] apparently because both the Rajputs and the aboriginal tribes have certain clan names in common In physical characteristics these tribes are sharply distinguished from the Rajputs, and yet we are asked to believe that they are essentially the same because some features of social organization are common to both The common clan names can better be explained as a borrowing by the lowly castes or tribes from the dominant Rajputs Thus there does not appear to be any serious objection to the Rajputs being classed as Indo-Aryans Thirdly, there does not seem to be any foundation for Risley's classification of the Kashmiris as Indo-Aryans The Kashmiris appear to be a mesaticephalic people perhaps a mixture of the Alpine folk of Central Asia and the Indo Aryans of the Punjab Lastly, we have made it clear that Risley was not right in restricting the type to the Punjab and Rajputana The type includes one or two high castes of Hindustan as well

As regards the affinities of Indo-Aryans outside India, Dr Haddon would perhaps see in them modified Proto-Nordics[2] But it is better to connect them with the tall variety of the Mediterranean Race

The Mongoloid type Here we have no comment to make except to draw attention to a mistake of Risley,[3] repeated in *Man Past and Present*[4] Both the Kanets of Kulu and Lahoul are there classed as Mongoloid A glance at the table for the Punjab will show that whereas the Kulu Kanets are very much akin to the Khatri of the Punjab, the Lahoul Kanets are quite distinct from them The Kanets of Kulu are Indo-Aryans, while the Kanets of Lahoul are a mixture of the Kulu Kanets with the Mongoloid folk Indeed, it was to elucidate the process of racial mixture between the Kanets of Kulu (who show marked points of contact with the Punjabis) and the Mongoloids that Holland, our authority on the subject, undertook a study of these two peoples[5]

The Dravidian type Here we come upon the weakest

[1] V A Smith, op cit, p 413
[2] *Wanderings of Peoples*, pp 26–7
[3] p 34
[4] p 547
[5] *JRAI* 1902, pp 114, 120

part of Risley's great work The type is supposed to spread from Ceylon to the valley of the Ganges the best representatives of it being Nayars Paniyans, Santals and others [1] This view has been repeated in *Man Past and Present*,[2] where though the jungle tribes like the Paniyans are classed apart as Pre-Dravidian, the Nayars and the Santals are given as the typical representatives of the Dravidian type Now even if we leave aside complexion, the Santal stands as far apart from the Nayar as the Paniyan The nasal index of the Nayar is 76 7, that of the Santal, 88 8, that of the Paniyan, 95 1 The close connection of the Santal with the jungle tribes of Southern India comes out more clearly if we take into account other tribes like the Irula and the Kanikar It may be broadly stated that the nasal index of the jungle tribes ranges from 80 to 90 We have therefore to connect the Santal with the jungle tribes and separate the Nayar and others like him from them

We propose to break up this composite group into four distinct types —

(*a*) The Pre-Dravidian type
(*b*) The Munda type
(*c*) The Dravida type
(*d*) The Western type

Before dealing with the types we must make a note about the use of certain terms The Malayalam and the Tamil regions seem to have been collectively referred to by Sanskrit writers as "Drāvida desa", i e the Dravid country, as opposed to the "Āndhra desa" or the Telugu country The type that we propose to designate Dravida is predominant only in the Malayalam and the Tamil regions Hence it should be deservedly called the Dravida type "Dravidian" is only an anglicized form of the word "drāvida" But in philology it has been used to denote not only Tamil and Malayalam but Canarese, Telugu, and kindred languages It is also employed to designate a culture different from the Aryan culture We think that it was developed by the interaction between the peoples of the Dravida type and those of the Western type It is convenient to retain this word to denote a culture which in its social organization was characterized at one end by such practices as cross-cousin

[1] Risley (2), pp 84–5 [2] p 847

marriage and at the other by dual organization and matrilineal descent

(*a*) The Pre Dravida type The characteristic representatives of this type inhabit mostly the jungles of Southern India They are also found in Western India, in the hilly country of Central India, in Rajputana, and the United Provinces, everywhere penetrating like a wedge Such a distribution makes it probable that these peoples were the first occupants of Southern India Being pressed by later immigrants they seem to have taken to the hills and jungles, or again managed to become low members of the social polity of the immigrants The immigrants who pressed upon them were the people of the Dravida type Hence the name of the type under consideration If we regard the Irula, the Kadir, the Kanikar, the Paniyan and the like as the best representatives of this type, its physical characteristics may be thus summed up The head is long, the cephalic index being generally below 75, the nose broad, the nasal index being always above 80 The Bhil and the Katkari of Western India are members of this racial stock The Musahar, the Pasi, the Chamar, and the low castes in general of the United Provinces belong to the same type From the fact that among the Kanikars of the hills the system of inheritance is from father to son, only a portion of the personal property being given to the nephew, while among those of the plains an equal distribution of one's self-acquired property is made between the sons and the nephews,[1] it is reasonable to assume that the pre-Dravida people were essentially patrilineal When they moved northwards they seem to have imbibed many of the items of the Dravidian culture They carried with them the practice of raising megalithic tombs and monuments, which are found in the Central Provinces, Eastern Rajputana, and the Mirzapur District of the United Provinces They spoke Dravidian languages, for some of the names of the villages in the Central Provinces end in a Canarese termination[2] and some village-names in the districts of Gaya and Mirzapur are distinctly Dravidian[3] As for social organization they seem to have carried the practice of

[1] Thurston op cit iii, p 169
[2] *Central Provinces District Gazetteers* *Chanda*, p 123
[3] *JASB* 1903, pt iii, pp 92–3

cross-cousin marriage, which now exists among them for the most part as a survival [1]

This type has till now been known as pre Dravidian Some authorities connect these people with the Sakai of the Malay Peninsula and the Australians [2] They might have been the autochthones of India That there is a negrito strain in this type is rendered clear by the researches of Dr B S Guha [3]

(*b*) The Munda type Peoples having a very slight tendency towards mesaticephaly and a broad-nose, nasal index above 80, are massed together in Chhota-Nagpur and Western Bengal They are also found in Bihar, but not in the United Provinces [4] In this region Munda culture seems to have originally flourished [5] Hence it is best to designate the type as the Munda type Some of the peoples belonging to this type speak Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages In culture the Munda peoples have affinities with the Indonesian and the Melanesian regions That this Munda culture had a far wider distribution than at present is certain because "Munda languages must once have been spoken over a wide area in Central India, and probably also in the Ganges Valley" [6] Further, some of the names of villages in the districts of Gaya and Mirzapur are Munda in origin [7] The Munda languages are closely related to the Mon-Khmer languages spoken by the Sakais and Semangs of the Malay Peninsula and are further connected with the languages of Indonesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia in such a manner as to allow us to group them together as one family [8] A survival of a peculiar custom, viz the marriage of grandfather with his granddaughter, is confined only to this part of India The existence of it among the Oraons was first made known by Rai Bahadur S C Roy A counterpart of it is known from Melanesia [9] Roy has also noticed certain practices from Bihar which are reminiscent of this survival [10] Another sort of survival of this curious custom is reported from Ganjam, where even now a Munda language is spoken

[1] *JRAS* 1907, p 626
[2] Keane, p 422
[3] *Nature*, 1929, pp 942–3
[4] Risley, pp 399–400
[5] Haddon p 26
[6] *Linguistic Survey of India*, iv, p 9
[7] *JASB* 1903, pt iii, pp 92–3
[8] *Linguistic Survey of India*, iv, p 14, and f n p 21
[9] S C Roy, *The Oraons*, pp 352–4
[10] Ibid

Among the Sollokhondia section of the Gaudo caste if a girl fails to secure a husband before puberty she has to go through a nominal marriage with an old man, 'preferably the girl s grandfather'[1] A similar practice prevails amongst the Kurumo of Ganjam[2] The custom of marriage between the granddaughter and the grandfather must have formed part of the Munda culture A neolithic artefact known as the "shouldered celt' is peculiar to the highlands of Bengal and Assam Identical tools are found in the Malayan region[3] The limited distribution of this implement in India lends support to the conclusion that the people who brought it to India must have come from the Malayan region Further as the tool is not found west of the area characterized by the Munda culture it is reasonable to suppose that the Munda people were responsible for the introduction of this artefact The conclusion about the origin of the Munda type is that the people of this type came into India from the Malayan region when they were in the Neolithic Age

The typical representative of this type are the Munda, the Santal, the Musahar, and the Chamar of Bihar

(*c*) The Dravida type This type is characterized by a long head, the cephalic index being below 75, and by a medium nose, the nasal index being less than 77 It is restricted to the Tamil and Malayalam countries[4] Matrilineal descent seems to have been the chief characteristic of the social organization of the peoples of this type A statement of Megasthenes is construed to refer to this peculiarity of the social organization of Malabar[5] A physical trait which we have not so far taken into consideration is the hair It is of special importance in connection with the inquiry of the affinities of this type Most castes of Malabar excepting the Nambudiri have little or no hair on the cheeks and the chest They are clean-shaven, and the Nambudiri imitating them shaves all his body excepting the top-knot "Amongst the people of good caste in Malabar, to speak of one as a hairy man is to speak of him reproachfully"[6] This lack of hair on the cheeks definitely connects the Dravidas with

[1] Thurston, op cit, ii p 276 [2] Ibid, vol iv, p 179
[3] *Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University, i, p 165
[4] Thurston, op cit, p 41 [5] W Logan, *Malabar*, i, p 247
[6] *Madras Museum Bulletin*, vol iii, p 38

the Brown Race as it is characterized by Elliot Smith[1] When they came to India from Mesopotamia or Arabia, cannot be ascertained They might have brought with them the matrilineal type of social organization from these countries, for there is some evidence for thinking that both the Arabs and the Babylonians practised mother-right[2]

The best representatives of this type are The Nayar, the Tiyan, the Badaga, the Agamudaiyan, and the Vellala We exclude the Nambudiris from this type because their cephalic index is above 75, and they are extremely hairy The Todas are a problem Their cephalic and nasal indices are such as to include them under this type, but their hairy system is particularly well developed Rivers connects them with the Malabar castes and attributes their hairiness to their environment[3] Against this explanation R Chanda has justly urged that the Badagas, another tribe of the Nilgiris, do not seem to be hairy[4] In view of the fact that ' of all the castes or tribes of Malabar, the Nambudiris perhaps show the greatest number of resemblances to the customs of the Todas ",[5] it is not unlikely that they might have some connection with the Nambudiris

(*d*) The Western type We shall deal with this type in connection with the Scytho-Dravidian type of Risley

The Aryo-Dravidian type As the discussion so far must have made it clear we cannot speak of any Aryo-Dravidian type We have shown that the high castes of the United Provinces (and perhaps also of Bihar) must be classed as Indo-Aryan The lower castes of the United Provinces must be referred to the pre-Dravidian type and those of Bihar to the Munda type That we must separate the low castes of Bihar from those of the United Provinces is made clear by the differential index The differential index between the Brahmins of the two provinces is 2 05, that between the Kurmis is 3 49, and that between the Chamars is 4 01 The intermediate castes of the United Provinces must be considered to be the result of a mixture between the Indo-Aryan and the pre-Dravidas, while those of Bihar that of

[1] *The Ancient Egyptians*, pp 50–62
[2] H Schaeffer, *The Social Legislation of the Primitive Semites*, p 8
[3] *The Todas* p 708
[4] *Journal of the Department of Letters*, Calcutta University, vol viii, p 300
[5] *The Todas*, p 709

the Indo-Aryans and the Mundas, with perhaps a pre-Dravida strain

The Mongolo Dravidian type This type, according to Risley, is a mixture of the pure Mongoloid and Dravidian types and comprises the population of Lower Bengal and Orissa He describes the head of this type as broad, but we think it would be better to describe it as medium Only the Rajbansi Maghs of the Chittagong Hills show a cephalic index of over 79 and they are essentially Mongoloid In Bengal the nasal index, with very few exceptions, is below 78 [1] The nasal index of the Mongoloid type in India is in most cases above this figure [2] Nor does the orbito-nasal index support any idea of a Mongoloid mixture In the case of the Mongoloid people it is below 110 [3] In three lower castes of Bengal—the Pod, the Bagdi, and the Chandal—the figures are 111 5, 112 2, and 114 0 In Orissa the orbito-nasal index varies from 112 to 117 We do not wish to imply that there is no Mongoloid mixture in this part of India, but only to point out that the published data of anthropometry do not give us any clue The Savaras of Ganjam are distinctly Mongoloid [4] Again some of the castes of the United Provinces show marked cultural affinities with the Mongoloid peoples Among the Bahelias, Dhangars, Dharkars, Dombs, Dusadhs, and Nais, marriage is permitted in the line of one's mother's sister [5] Everywhere else in India such marriages are strictly prohibited, hence the permission for such marriages among these castes is very unusual We can explain it only as a borrowing from the Mongoloid people, the Bhotias of Sikkim Among them one can marry one's cousin on the maternal side, either mother's brother's child or mother's sister's child [6] We think that the Bengalis are only an extension of the Western type The differential index shows that the Bengal Brahmin is more nearly related to the Shenvi and the Chitpavan Brahmins of Bombay than to the Bihar Brahmin and far more so than to the United Provinces Brahmin There is evidence to show that the people of Bengal have affinities

[1] Risley, p 401
[2] Ibid, p 402
[3] Ibid, p 31
[4] Thurston, op cit, vi, p 312
[5] *U P Census Report*, 1911, p 212
[6] *Bengal Census Report*, 1911, p 326

with the Dravidian culture The use in marriage of the Chank-bangles even by the Brahmins is an instance in point[1] Risley thinks that there is "a strain of Indo-Aryan blood in the higher groups"[2] In view of the fact that the differential index between the Bengal Brahmin and the Chandal is 1 11, while between him and the United Provinces Brahmin is 3 89, there does not seem any ground for this supposition In Orissa there appears to be some mixture of the Munda type, because the nasal index is sometimes very high The people of Bengal and Orissa, therefore, would best be regarded as a mixture of the Western and the Munda types slightly modified in some cases by the Mongoloid type

The Scytho-Dravidian type What Risley exactly meant by the term Scythian is not clear He could not have meant Mongoloid, for then there would have been no point in distinguishing this type from the Mongolo-Dravidian Perhaps he used the word as equivalent to the Śakas of Sanskrit writers That there is no evidence of the Śakas having reached so far as this type stretches is amply proved[3] We must, therefore, give up this designation of the type We propose to call it the Western type, because it characterizes the Western Coast from Gujarat to South Canara, and thence spreads inwards into Coorg, Mysore, the Deccan, and the Telugu country and through Orissa into Bengal The head is mostly medium with a slight tendency towards broad, the nasal index in most communities is below 78 Representatives of this type are Sale, Bant, Vakkaliga, Coorga, Shenvi, Prabhu, Nagar, Chitpavan, Mala, Madiga, and Holeya Chanda seeks to connect the Gujaratis, the Marathis, and the Bengalis with a people of the Alpine Race that, he supposes, came from Chinese Turkistan And he has the support of no less an authority than Dr Haddon, who first postulated an immigration of the Alpine folks to account for the "strongly marked brachycephalic element in the population of Western India"[4] Against this route of immigration it must be objected that if the Alpine people came through Kashmir and the Punjab, how is it that we

[1] J Hornell, *The Sacred Chank of India*, pp 145–6
[2] Op cit, p 33
[3] Risley, (2), p xx
[4] Op cit, p 27, and Map 1

have no trace of either brachycephaly or mesaticephaly in the intervening area till we come to Gujarat? Further, the highest cephalic indices are recorded from the southern part of the region characterized by this type, i e from Bellary The distribution of the type sketched above suggests quite a different route of immigration, i e on the western coast by sea Most of the castes are mesaticephalic and nine of the castes of the Marathi region, pooled together, give 77 84 as the mean cephalic index It is therefore more reasonable to seek the origin of this type in a mixed stock rather than in a purely Alpine one, for the latter has a very broad head, the cephalic index being often 85 and upwards[1] Western Asia seems to provide us with such a people, for there we notice a prolonged process of mixture between the Brown race and the Alpine race[2] Dr Schoff sees in Cutch or Kachh reminiscences of the Kassites who migrated from Elam about 2200 B C[3] Mr H J E Peake thinks that about 2000 B C some of the Nordics had made their appearance in Asia Minor[4] If some of them accompanied the people who landed on the western coast of India, we can explain the colour of the eyes of the Chitpavans of Bombay It is greenish grey rather than blue Their eyes are known in Marathi as "cat-eyes"[5]

Giuffrida Ruggeri has suggested the following classification of the ethnic elements in India (*a*) Negritos Apparently there are no representatives of these He thinks that they survive in tribes like the Bhils, the Gonds, etc[6] (*b*) Pre-Dravidians (Australoid Veddaic), (*c*) Dravidians They are connected with the Ethiopians, with the exception of the Somalis and Gallas[7] Under this category he includes the mesaticephalic and the brachycephalic peoples of the Canarese-Telugu regions[8] Being afraid of sea migration—witness his gibe at Elliot Smith[9]—he brings the Dravidians into India from Iran, and explains the "elevation of the cephalic index among the inhabitants of the south by a mixture with the brachycephalic Negritos, the most ancient

[1] Keane, p 438
[2] Elliot Smith, op cit, p 136
[3] *The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, p 134
[4] *JRAI* 1916, p 172, and Map 2
[5] *Bombay Gazetteer*, vol x, p 111, f n 3
[6] *Journal of the Department of Letters* Calcutta University, v, p 226
[7] Ibid, p 219
[8] Ibid, p 222
[9] Ibid, p 238

population between India and the Persian Gulf"[1] He entirely misses the significance of the distribution of the dolichocephalic and mesaticephalic types explained above (*d*) Tall dolichocephalic elements (Toda),[2] (*e*) dolichocephalic Aryans Under this class he includes Kafirs, Dards, Rajputs, and the Kanet of Lahoul[3] (*f*) Brachycephalic Leucoderms He accepts the hypothesis of Chanda,[4] about immigration of the Alpine folk It will have been quite clear from our discussion that such a classification is untenable The ascertained facts of Indian anthropometry are far better accommodated by the classification that emerges out of our discussion

We would distinguish six main physical types among the Hindu population of India These are (1) The Indo-Aryan, (2) pre-Dravidian (3) the Dravida, (4) the Western (5) the Munda, and (6) the Mongoloid The Indo-Aryan type is confined to the Punjab, Rajputana, and part of the United Provinces, and is mixed with the pre-Dravida and Munda types in the last province among its lower classes The Munda type centres round Chota-Nagpur The population of Bihar is formed by the mixture of three types, viz the Indo-Aryan, the pre-Dravida, and the Munda, while that of Bengal and Orissa combines the Western, the Munda and the Mongoloid types The Mongoloid proper is confined to the Himalayas, Nepal, and Assam The Western type is found on the western coast right up to the northern limits of Malabar, in Mysore and the Telugu country, and in the whole of Mahārāshtra The Dravida type makes up the population of the Tamil and Malayalam speaking districts of the south, excepting the rudest hill-tribes The jungle folks of South India generally represent the pre-Dravidian type

[1] Ibid, p 216
[2] Ibid, p 220
[3] Ibid, p 256
[4] Ibid, p 216

CHAPTER VI

ELEMENTS OF CASTE OUTSIDE INDIA

WITH the elements of Indian caste before us it will be instructive to see if any one or many of them in combination characterize any other community, civilized or tribal In our quest for these elements we shall pass under review Egypt, Western Asia, China, Japan, America, and the tribal peoples on the one hand and Rome and tribal Europe on the other

In Egypt during the Pyramid age there were three principal classes—the land owners, the serfs and the slaves, the last two being distinguished from the first by the fact of their owning no land [1] During the Eighteenth Dynasty, to judge from the classification made in an official census, there seem to have been at least four classes They were the soldiers—who included among them all free persons of the middle class, not engaged in any of the other callings—the priests, the craftsmen, and the serfs The first two classes had so many common interests that they were clearly distinguished from the rest [2] Yet in actual influence and possession of wealth the clergy were far superior to the soldiers [3] And they had by then formed themselves into a huge sacerdotal organization [4] The social situation is thus summarized by Petrie "When we look at the various classes of the country, it is evident that there was, very naturally, a large amount of hereditary succession to office and to business We see the same in England or any other country, although everyone is free to change his occupation as he prefers In Egypt, on the contrary, no artisan was allowed to have another trade or employment, or be reckoned in any other class Hence, once in a trade, it was impossible to move out of it, and the natural facility of a boy learning his father's trade tended to fix each generation into the same line Thus the impression

[1] Breasted, (2), p 67
[2] Breasted, (1), p 246
[3] Maspero, p 305
[4] Breasted, (1), p 247

which the Greeks received when stepping into such a society was that its structure was a group of genea or hereditary tribes "[1] It was not only the artisan who was prevented from attempting to enter another calling but it appears that a member of other lower classes as well was not allowed to follow any other occupation than that of his father As a result, offices often remained in the same families for many generations Thus we are told in the inscriptions that the office of architect continued in a certain family for twenty-three generations [2] The goldsmith s art as well as that of the painter and the sculptor was traditionally handed down from father to son [3] As regards the three middle-class professions, viz those of a priest, a scribe and a warrior, though generally they ran in the same families, yet there was no restriction against any one following any of these callings, even if one's father might not have professed that particular calling but had carried on one of the other two Nay, one and the same man, on suitable occasions, could be a priest, a military or naval commander or could act as a scribe and an official "A general in the army could marry the daughter of a priest, and his children could be scribes, priests or public functionaries "[4] By the time of the early Ptolemies, however, and possibly earlier, only persons descended from priests could enter their profession They had secured for the members of their class exemption from poll-tax [5] Under the influence of their scribes, who were trying to exalt their own profession over the others, the Egyptians came to hold the agriculturists as well as the able craftsmen in light esteem [6]

Among the Sumerians the aristocracy of the city was formed by the priests and the officials, while the free land-holding citizens formed the middle class, who worked their lands with the help of the slaves [7] The fragments of Sumerian laws that have come down to us recognize no inequalities among these classes of the community [8] But in the Code of Hammurapi, the nature and amounts of fines and punishments

[1] Petrie, pp 11–12 [2] Spencer, iii, p 422 [3] Erman, p 460
[4] Wilkinson, i, p 159, a note by Dr S Birch
[5] A M Blackman, in *Ency of R and E*, vol x, p 299 (*b*)
[6] Erman, p 446 Breasted, (1), p 169
[7] Breasted, (2), p 119 [8] Brooks, p 88

are mostly determined by the class-status of the offender and the sufferer[1] The law of limb for limb was restricted to those cases only where the sufferer belonged to the highest class, physical injuries in other cases being generally compensated for by fines For a physical injury inflicted by a patrician on a plebeian the fine was one third that which a plebeian would have had to pay if he had caused it to his equal In the case of theft the patrician paid thrice the fine that the plebeian had to pay While divorcing a wife, for whom no bride-price was paid the patrician had to pay her thrice the award that was demanded of a plebeian The surgeon's fees depended on the status of the patient the higher the status, the larger the fees[2]

Woolley thinks that this class-system was military in its origin, and that was the reason why the lives of the patricians, who formed the regular army, were valued more than those of the non-combatant citizens[3] This theory enables us to explain why in those cases where property was involved the the higher classes had also greater responsibilities

Whether all the males that were either descended from the same parents or were adopted in the family actually carried on the trade of the family is not quite clear "Certainly many men who carried on a trade were 'sons' of the trade-father, but apparently not all"[4] And a clause in the code of Hammurapi lends support to the view that to enter into a particular trade, which was not followed by one's father, one had to seek legal adoption into a family that carried on that trade[5] In some cities the trades had their distinct quarters[6]

A slave could marry a free woman, the offspring being regarded as free No disgrace seems to have attached to such a marriage, and such a free woman could bring with her a marriage portion as if she had married in her own rank[7]

In the earliest period of the Iranian civilization, i e before 700 B C, three classes of society are often mentioned, priests, warriors, and husbandmen, but the fourth class, formed by artisans, is only once mentioned, though there is frequent

[1] Jastrow, p 298
[2] Johns, p 74, and pp 44–63 of the *Code of Hammurapi* edited by him
[3] Woolley, p 97 [4] Johns, p 121 [5] Brooks, p 44
[6] Johns, p 121 [7] Ibid, pp 75, 186

reference to the work carried on by members of this class, viz goldsmith, blacksmith, mason, etc The origin of these classes is attributed to Zarathushtra[1] According to the Shāh Nāmah, however, the four classes were made by Yima[2] In the Sasanian period, A D 226–651, we get more frequent references to these classes and their relative position is also more well defined The priests are likened to the head of man the warriors to his hands, the husbandmen to his stomach, and the artisans to his feet Further, we are told that the members of the last class engaged also in trade and commerce The four classes were credited with different virtues good nature being that of the premier class, resourcefulness and manliness of the second, strenuous tillage of the third and diligence and skill of the fourth It is further observed that the work of the priest is of the highest merit, and the lowest in the scale of usefulness is the work of the fourth class, more particularly their work of trade and commerce[3]

The profession of the priest seems to have been hereditary from the earliest times when the classes began to be recognized By the Sasanian period it was held to be the natural order to follow the occupation of one's ancestors And if anyone wanted to try a profession other than the one of his class, he was allowed to do so only if, on examination, he proved to be a man of marked talent[4]

It was only in the late period of Iranian history that there came to be any impediments to intermarriage between the different classes of society, the priestly class arrogating to itself the right of marrying girls from the laity, though refusing to give theirs to the lay youths[5] Intermarriage of a Zoroastrian with a non-Zoroastrian was condemned in strong terms[6]

In China it is supposed that society has, from time immemorial, been divided into four orders, viz gentlemen, agriculturists, artisans, and merchants Gentlemen were all the members of the governing class, the members of the civil service, admission to which depended on a literary test, open to almost all who would like to try their luck and intelligence "No profession except that of serving the

[1] Dhalla, p 65 [2] Ibid, p 7 [3] Ibid, p 295
[4] Ibid, p 296 [5] Ibid, p 78 [6] Ibid, p 304

State entitles a man to be called a 'gentleman" Banker barrister, physician, priest, merchant-prince, manufacturer, engineer, none of these could be styled a gentleman on the strength of either his profession or wealth The sole cachet of aristocracy is literary attainment which has given its proofs "[1] There was a slightly lower grade division of this class which was formed by those who had qualified for the civil service and yet had to be on the waiting list for lack of suitable appointments These were known as the scholars[2] Next in order stood the workers of the soil, agriculture being regarded, from very early times, a very noble calling The social ladder was not quite complete with the traders There still remained the barbers and their sons who were reckoned among the pariah classes and were debarred from competing for the civil service[3] According to Confucius, the people were divided into five classes, which in the descending order of social prestige were scholars, farmers, artisans, merchants, and servants, soldiers being always included in the last group[4]

Ranks were distinguished by different head-dresses, garments, badges, etc[5] None whose parents were engaged in one of the degrading occupations, like menial service, play-acting or brothel-keeping, was allowed to compete for the civil service[6] One of the emperors forbade the use of silk garments or carriages by merchants, and in order to render that calling unpopular he levied heavy taxes on them[7]

Except the civil service, it appears that most of the other occupations were customarily hereditary One of the Chinese books lays it down as a rule that "the sons of officers ought always to be officers, the sons of artisans ought always to be artisans The sons of merchants ought always to be merchants, and the sons of farmers ought always to be farmers "[8]

Marriages between officials and actresses or singing girls were not allowed In the case of nobles of hereditary rank entering into such a union the penalty was degradation to

[1] Brinkley, xi, pp 202–4
[2] Douglas, p 116
[3] Ibid, pp 120–46
[4] Bashford, p 43
[5] Werner (1), Table I
[6] Brinkley xi, pp 208–9
[7] Brinkley, x, p 132
[8] Spencer, iii, p 422

for the farmers Till the latter part of the seventeenth century it had not been usual to send a Samurai to gaol for any crime[1] The Eta had to live on the outskirts of towns and villages and were governed by their own headmen Prejudice against this unfortunate class of people was so great that it long survived the removal of their legal disabilities in 1871, serving as a theme for novelists[2]

The outcasts could not marry persons of the higher classes[3] During the feudal age intermarriage among the various recognized classes of society required special permission[4]

In Mexico, as a result of its conquest by the Europeans, the population is divided into three main well marked groups with numerous sub-divisions The highest class is formed of members who have a more or less pure Spanish descent, the half breed coming next, and the pure Indians forming the lowest class[5] When the Spaniards captured Mexico they found that the sons generally learned the trades and entered the professions of their fathers "The different trades were arranged into something like guilds, having each a particular district of the city appropriated to it, with its own chief, its own tutelary deity, its peculiar festivals"[6]

Among the Kayans and Kenyaks of Borneo there are three classes, the upper, middle, and the slave[7] The Maoris distinguish the following orders in their society the sacerdotal chiefs of smaller tribal divisions, the skilled artisans and other professionals, the bulk of the comparatively poor population and lastly the slaves taken captive in war[8] The Samoans recognize six classes The chiefs, priests, landed gentry, large landowners, commoners, and slaves, the first not being wholly uniform[9] But the most distinct and unbridgeable gulf lies between the patricians and the plebeians—the two main divisions of society comprising the above classes[10] Tahitian society was divided into classes that were insuperably distinct from one another The privileged class was composed of the reigning king, the chieftains, and their relations Next in rank came the gentry

[1] Brinkley, iv pp 64–6, 76
[2] Chamberlain, pp 149–50
[3] Brinkley (2), vol ii, p 50
[4] *Ency of R and E*, viii p 459 (*b*)
[5] Spence, p 25
[6] Spencer, vol iii pp 422–45
[7] Hose and McDougall, i, p 68
[8] Lowie, pp 346–7
[9] Ibid, p 347
[10] Ibid, p 349

and the farmers artisans and fishermen forming the next class The lowest class comprised servants and slaves[1] Among the Hawaiians, society was marked by an exclusive class division all persons belonging by birth to one of the three classes The *arii* or the nobles, the *hakuaina* or land-proprietors and the priests, the *canaka-mowree* or the common people, comprising the small farmers, artisans and professionals, fishermen and labourers[2]

In some parts of Fiji the people are divided into small independent bodies with smaller groups within each, these latter being called *Matanggali* In some cases the Matanggali of a tribe have different functions, and some of these groups among the ordinary people are differentiated by the possession of special occupations[3]

The people of Borneo nearly always marry within their class, though persons of the middle class sometimes do marry females of the slave class[4] In the Carolinas, apart from the slaves, there are two classes, the lower of which is forbidden to touch the higher on pain of death Further they are not allowed to carry on fishing and seafaring nor to marry with members of the higher class[5] Africa provides us with a very interesting case of obligatory endogamy The smiths often form a social group kept distinct from the rest of the community to which they belong by having to marry within their group[6]

In South Arabia there were two classes of Pariahs One class, comprising the artisans, was regarded as the subordinate menials of the dominant class Its members were required to live on the outskirts of the towns, and though admitted into the mosques were not allowed to visit Arab houses The other class of Pariahs was regarded as still inferior, and its members were not allowed to enter even the mosque, though they were devout Mohammedans[7]

There is enough evidence to show that the Arabs had no

[1] Featherman, ii *b*, p 37 [2] Ibid p 244

[3] Rivers, pp 264–5 N B —The account of the Fijian and the Samoan classes given by A M Hocart makes it quite clear that these systems are copied from the Hindu caste system See the summary appearing in *Nature*, 7th April, 1928, p 551

[4] Hose and McDougall, pp 71–2

[5] Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, 1916, p 274, f n 5

[6] Rivers in *Ency of R and E*, viii, p 424 (*b*)

[7] Featherman, v, p 424

law of endogamy. But they did not like to intermarry with people who had different tastes and customs.[1]

In ancient Rome the populace was for a long time divided into three groups—the patricians, the plebeians, and the slaves. Of these the first two classes comprised all the free men. It is a matter of common knowledge that the evolution of political institutions in Rome was largely the result of a conflict between the patricians, the politically privileged class, and the plebeians who were politically insignificant. Up to the time of Servius Tullius the patricians alone ranked as citizens. Their marriage was regarded as sanctified and lawful. They had the special powers of testamentary disposition. None but they could consult the gods of Rome by a specially sacred procedure.[2] The plebeians were the artisans and craftsmen of Rome. Their marriages were not celebrated with the religious ceremony to which the patricians were accustomed, and were looked upon by the latter as not involving the legal consequences of marriage.[3] This disparity between the class and the mass in their political as well as socio-religious rights was gradually removed, so that by 287 B.C. the two groups were placed on a footing of equality.[4] During the early part of the Empire, the development of economic life had advanced so far that specialized arts and crafts had formed guilds. Thus the shoemakers had amongst them various divisions like boot-makers, sandal-makers, slipper-makers, and ladies' shoe-makers. Workers in the same craft and trade congregated at Rome and elsewhere in Italy in special districts.[5] Roman laws of the fifth century of the Christian era reveal the upper class as cut off from the masses. Every social grade and occupation was "practically hereditary, from the senator to the waterman on the Tiber, or the sentinel at a frontier post." There was a tendency to stereotype social life by preventing free circulation among different callings and grades in society.[6] The Theodosian Code compelled a youth to follow the employment of his father.[7]

In prehistoric Rome endogamy existed to this extent that

[1] Smith, W. Robertson, pp. 74–5, and f.n. 2.
[2] Muirhead, p. 6.
[3] Ibid., pp. 11–12.
[4] Leage, p. 14.
[5] Friedlander, vol. i, p. 147.
[6] Dill, pp. 228–33.
[7] Lambert, p. 12.

could have the option of demanding either the wergeld that was proper to his original rank or one that was due to him because of his ecclesiastical rank[1]

If a slave stole the property of a freeman he had to pay twice the amount as compensation, while if the theft was committed by a freeman he paid thrice If it was the priest's property that was stolen ninefold compensation had to be paid[2] If a man's servant killed a nobleman, whose wergeld was three hundred shillings, the owner had to surrender the servant and pay the price of three men, but if he killed a commoner, whose wergeld was only a hundred shillings, then the owner paid the price of only one man in addition to surrendering the homicide If a priest killed a man—any freeman—he was ejected from the monastic order and his property confiscated[3] Fornication with a nobleman's serving maid was to be compensated for by double the sum of money that had to be paid in the case of the same offence being committed in respect of the serving maid of a commoner If a man committed adultery with the wife of a servant, he had to pay compensation, while if he did the same with the wife of a freeman he had to procure a second wife in addition to compensation If a betrothed woman of the commoner class was guilty of fornication, she was ordered to pay 60 shillings as compensation to the surety of the marriage, if she belonged to the higher class, this amount was to be greater in proportion to her wergeld "If anyone rapes the slave of a commoner, he shall pay 5 shillings to the commoner, and a fine of 60 shillings If a slave rapes a slave, castration shall be required as compensation" For illicit union a nobleman had to pay double the commoners' compensation[4] Breaking into the premises of a nobleman had to be atoned for by thrice or six times the fine that had to be paid for the same offence against a commoner In the scale of compensation that a man had to pay for fighting in the house of another the same proportion had to be maintained between the two classes[5] A priest could clear himself of any charge by a simple declaration, a clerk had to place his hand on the altar accompanied by three men of

[1] Ibid, p 84
[2] Attenborough, pp 5, 17
[3] Ibid, pp 19–75
[4] Ibid, pp 7, 9, 15, 25, 73, 75
[5] Ibid, pp 81–3

his class, while a commoner was required to clear himself by the collective oath of himself and three of his own class [1] ' If a nobleman who holds land neglects military service, he shall pay 120 shillings and forfeit his land, a nobleman who holds no land shall pay 60 shillings, a commoner shall pay a fine of 30 shillings for neglecting military service " [2]

By the thirteenth century the law of status had become relatively insignificant, and the law of tenure had risen into prominence Accordingly the lawbooks have very little to say about the ranks of men and a great deal about tenures " In the main all free men are equal before the law Just because this is so, the line between the free and the unfree seems very sharp " And even this distinction is very apt to appear in practice as a difference in tenures The clergy was gaining in importance Every ordained clerk was subject to special rules of ecclesiastical and secular law If he committed any of the crimes known as felonies, he could be tried only by an ecclesiastical court A layman assaulting a clerk had to submit to a trial by the ecclesiastical as well as by the temporal tribunals [3]

By the fifteenth century commercial spirit had grown so much that the dwindling ideas of status had come to be replaced by social distinctions based on the possession of wealth, even land being regarded as a mere manifestation and a source of wealth The failure of the sumptuary laws of this period is a measure of the futility of keeping the old class divisions [4]

In Scandinavia during the early Middle Ages the following scheme of social classes was in force highborn men comprising the kingly families and their immediate liegemen, the nobles, the great landed middle class, including all grades of freeholders, freed men and their descendants of many generations, and slaves It was possible for members of lower rank to rise to the superior grade both by marriage as well as by accumulation of wealth Yet the social stratification made its mark on social etiquette and legal and sacerdotal affairs Thus, in the great banqueting halls seats were so arranged that the lowliest members might be

[1] Ibid, p 29
[2] Ibid, p 53
[3] Pollock and Maitland, pp 407, 412, 439, 441
[4] Abram, p 72

accommodated nearest the door. "Class discrimination was, however, felt most in connection with legal and governmental matters, in determining the amount of wergeld which must be paid if a member of the population was wronged or killed, in the composition of the juries, and in the exercise of legislative and judicial power at the political assemblies." In the public cemeteries of the Christian church the nobles were buried in the most sacred ground, nearest to the church, while the other classes had their burying places at further distances in the descending order of their rank, the slaves being relegated to the ground nearest the wall of the churchyard.[1]

During mediaeval times all over Europe trades and crafts were highly organized. There was a certain lack of freedom, therefore, about the choice of a trade or a craft. Thus in England, where smithcraft was held in special esteem, no villain was allowed to carry on that craft without his lord's permission.[2] When the important crafts came to be organized into guilds, anyone who desired to practise a particular craft had to join the guild as a journeyman to take his training in that craft. At first, it seems, admission was unrestricted and the conditions fairly light, thus making the guilds more or less free associations of persons, engaged in crafts and pledged to instructing the new generation in the means of getting their livelihood. But in later times, about the thirteenth century, they degenerated into family coteries. The widow of a guildsman might carry on the trade of her husband or could confer the freedom of the guild on her second husband if he was following the same trade. But if she married a man not belonging to the same craft, not only could she not confer the freedom of the guild on her new husband but she herself was excluded from the guild. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the restrictions on admission to craft-guilds became more and more rigorous, and the handicrafts became practically the monopolies of a few families.

About the same time in Germany a candidate for admission into a guild had to furnish proofs of pure birth in order to be worthy of such admission. Whole classes of people were

[1] Williams, pp. 35–6. [2] Traill, vol. i, p. 104.

being excluded from the guilds on the pretence of some infamy attaching to their birth, so much so that, after the sixteenth century, legislation had to be passed to remedy this growing evil Apprentices, who proved the purity of their birth, had to undergo heavy expenses and during their probation had to undertake long travel, extending over as many as five years, before they could set up as masters of their crafts Further, before a craftsman could set up independent practice, he had to prepare a masterpiece, which generally was a very costly and a useless article The sons of master-craftsmen were, on the other hand, free from all these prohibitive conditions In effect the guilds became clubs of families, hereditarily carrying on the particular crafts

"The punishments decreed by the craft guilds consisted in the payment of fines, or in earlier times in certain qualities of wax, or of beer or wine to be drunk at their feasts" Offences like forging led to exclusion from the guild and withdrawal of the right to practise the craft [1] The members of each craft usually occupied the same locality Thus in London, the weavers concentrated in Cannon Street, smiths in Smithfield, and so on "Such a grouping must have enormously strengthened the sense of corporate life in each craft" [2]

Though the crafts, the practice of which was from very early times hedged in by many restrictions, had become more or less hereditary, the learned professions and commerce had begun to offer fresh fields for the intelligent youths "The church had always provided clever youths with an opportunity of rising in the world" Toward the end of the fourteenth and throughout the following century, it seems, the clergy were largely recruited from the middle classes and even from serfs, the economic changes rendering the profession less attractive to the members of the upper classes In the fifteenth century the legal profession also opened up possibilities of a brilliant career [3]

In the cities of Europe guilds were ranked according to the recognized importance of their trades The principle

[1] Toulmin Smith (Lujo Brentano in), pp cxxvi–vii, cxxxii, cxlix–cli
[2] Ashley, p 96
[3] Abram, pp 99, 106

on which the occupations were rated was evidently not the vital importance of the needs which were supplied by them "The status of a profession seems to have depended on whether it was more or less honourable, lucrative or ancient The place of honour was reserved for those crafts in which brainwork took precedence over manual work They were regarded as more honourable, evidently because in the dualistic conception which governed Christian societies, spirit was placed above matter, the intellectual above the animal part of man" The occupations demanding intellectual work alone came to be designated "liberal" professions, as contrasted with those involving manual labour, these latter being termed "servile" In the university towns the professors occupied the first rank and shared with the nobles the privilege of walking on the wall side of the pavement The doctors also belonged to this category, though their brethren of lower origins, the surgeon-barbers, were relegated to a lower status on account of their partiality for surgical operations Though craftsmen usually were rated low, the goldsmiths had secured a high rank Dealers in articles that were to be brought from distant countries, like spices and furs, were ranked very high Bankers, moneychangers, and wholesale dealers were distinguished not only because their professions required quickness of perception, complicated calculations, wide range of vision and rare thought, but also because of their show of wealth "It is easy to see that in the priority accorded to the great industrial and commercial guilds, the second of the principles we have mentioned was at work, namely, that a craft was considered more or less honourable according to the wealth it yielded It was undoubtedly for this reason that the butchers, who had numerous assistants working under their orders and who made considerable profit, sometimes managed in Paris to be included among the 'Six Guilds'" Home crafts suffered from internal competition and thus were ranked rather low At Florence the baker and bread-makers came last in the list of the twenty-one official guilds [1]

It was in keeping with these ideas of occupational dignity that in France a member of the nobility had his noble state

[1] Renard, pp 57–61

suspended if he carried on trade or handicraft, incompatible with the profession of arms [1]

The laws of the Anglo-Saxons laid it down that none was to seek in marriage a mate outside one's class, so that if a person of lower status married a woman of a higher class he was to perish [2] By the fifteenth century in England this rule of endogamy had almost vanished, so much so that one of the usual methods by which the needy nobles replenished their empty purses was by marrying the daughters or widows of rich merchants Such marriages went a long way in fusing the upper and the middle classes [3] In France, in the later period of the Roman Empire, the workmen, employed in the manufactures of the State like that of arms, were not allowed to marry their daughters outside their group [4] In the eyes of the tribal law the only legal marriage that could take place was between free-born people of equal status The free woman who married her own slave lost her freedom, and had her property confiscated, and the slave was killed on the wheel Where a free man married either his slave or a freed woman, neither the wife nor the issue of the union attained the rank of the man [5] During the feudal age, however, legitimate children took the status of their father, the principle that gentility came from the father being gradually recognized If a free woman married a nobleman she attained his status but not so a servile woman [6] In Germany "the consequences of equality of birth in private law made themselves felt in the law of family and inheritance Only an equal born member of the estate had the right of exercising guardianship over minors and women And only between those equal in birth was there a right of inheritance" Originally members of different status-groups could not contract a legal marriage A free woman's marriage with a slave meant loss of freedom to the

[1] Brissaud (2), p 300
[2] N K Sidhanta, *The Heroic Age of India*, pp 136–7
[3] Abram, p 89 N B —Compare the practice of the Japanese Samurai, in the middle of the eighteenth century, of adopting into their families the sons of rich commoners to replenish their treasury Yosoburo Takekoshi, *The Economic Aspects of the History of the Civilization of Japan*, 1930, vol ii, pp 452–3
[4] Brissaud (2), p 48
[5] Brissaud (1), pp 158–9
[6] Brissaud (2), pp 291, f n 6, 298

woman or of life to the slave Under the influence of Christianity the rigour of laws against unequal marriages was much lessened, such unions being regarded as only inferior marriages and the issue as quite legitimate But the higher status of one of the parties could not be conferred on the other, the issue being naturally relegated to the status of the lower-born Exceptionally the children of a union, where the wife was a free woman and the husband half free or unfree, were allowed to inherit the natural freedom of their mother In the newer grouping of society on the occupational basis "the principle of equal birth was less and less heeded" Only the higher nobility has still clung to it [1]

To sum up, distinction by birth has been usually recognized by many primitive peoples and almost all the major civilizations of ancient times The primitive peoples, in so far as their arts and crafts are neither many, nor highly specialized, have few classes whose status is fixed But wherever status is recognized, privileges and restrictions in the matter of the choice of avocation are very common Restriction on the choice of one's mate based on birth is comparatively infrequent among them In tribal England, in Rome, and in Asiatic civilizations, occupations not only tended to become hereditary but were actually prescribed to be followed by specific classes and graded in certain order as high and low Specialized occupations had come to form themselves into units of community life Society was divided into two, three, four, or five well-marked status groups, intermarriage between which was often prohibited The Chinese civilization, before it was influenced by Indian ideas, seems to have been the freest in its social grouping

Well-marked status-groups within a society, distinguished from one another by rights and disabilities, separated from one another by the absence of freedom of intermarriage, may, therefore, be considered to be a common characteristic of the mental background and social picture of the Indo-European cultures Specialization of occupations, accompanied by solidarity within specific occupations and great unfreedom about their choice, was a feature common to the ancient and mediaeval times The circumstances that led

[1] Huebner, pp 92–4, 99

to the abolition of distinctions, based on birth and occupation, in Rome and in England are peculiar to each and cannot be gone into here Suffice it for us to remember that in each case it was the special conditions, making for political unity and commercial aggrandisement, that slowly killed the ideas of status by birth and removed the unfreedom of occupation

Note —It has not been possible to check all the references in this chapter as I could not get all the books in Bombay (G S G)

CHAPTER VII

ORIGINS OF CASTE

SOCIAL differentiation with its attendant demarcation of groups and of status of individuals is a very widespread feature of human society[1] In by far the larger number of communities this status depends on the individual's achievement in those fields of activity which are prized by those communities They range from capacity for certain types of supernatural experience to ability to acquire wealth The visible marks of this differentiation are, as we have seen, special rights for some groups and disabilities on others in the matter of dress, occupation, and even food In other communities the status of an individual is determined by birth People, speaking Indo-European tongues, carried this theory of status by birth to a farther extent than any other peoples, both in the matter of the number of differentiated groups within a society as well as in the matter of their rights and disabilities Some of them even enjoined that members of a group shall marry in their own group Thus it would be seen that the Hindu system is unique only in this that it alone classified some groups as untouchable and unapproachable[2] In other respects it only differs in the thoroughness with which the scheme is worked out and in the number of differentiated groups

Of the many cultures that flourished in India the literary records of the Indo-Aryan culture are not only the earliest but contain the first mention and a continuous history of the factors that make up caste The only other culture whose records are intelligible is the Dravidian, but when that culture put forward its documents that are extant, it had already been immensely influenced by the Indo-Aryan tradition The brahmanic variety of this Indo-Aryan civilization—it is the most widely and deeply spread aspect—

[1] See C C North, *Social Differentiation*

[2] Untouchability in Japan can hardly be regarded as quite independent of the Indian ideas on the subject

was developed in the Gangetic plain We therefore conclude that some of the important aspects of caste originated in this region The data of physical anthropology of the present day population of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, analysed in the fifth chapter, corroborate this view Caste in India then must be regarded as a brahmanic child of the Indo Aryan culture, cradled in the land of the Ganges and thence transferred to other parts of India by the Brahmin-prospectors That the spread of the Indo-Aryan culture outside Hindustan must have been largely the work of individual Brahmins or of small batches of Brahmin preachers, is clear from the legends about Agastya, who is regarded amongst the Tamils as the pioneer of their culture The picture of Brahmin sages, maintaining small colonies in the then forested parts of South India, preserved in the Rāmāyana is another indication of the same fact Memories preserved in the Pāli work, the Sutta Nipāta, in the story of the Brahmin sage Bāvari also point in the same direction On the basis of this hypothesis the following genesis of the origins of the various factors of caste is clearly warranted by the data adduced in the preceding chapters

The Indo-Aryans, when they entered India, came with a certain sense of their importance and a spirit of exclusiveness born of such an attitude They must have had among them at least three well-defined classes, intermarriage between whom must have been rather rare, though not positively forbidden Their first regulations in this line began with the task of excluding the Śūdras, which class must have been largely formed by the aborigines, from their religious worship We have seen that the Śūdra was represented as the lowest class in society Very early in their Indian history the Aryans enjoined that the Śūdra shall not practise the religious worship developed by them Nay, they even forbade his presence in the sacrificial hall The three first castes were first enjoined not to marry a Śūdra female before any other restriction of an endogamous nature was tried to be promulgated A Śūdra male trying to marry a Brahmin female was the greatest sacrilege that could be perpetrated against society The various factors that characterize caste-society were the result, in the first instance, of the attempts on the part of the upholders of the brahmanic

civilization to exclude the aborigines and the Śūdras from religious and social communion with themselves That the Śūdra class was largely formed by those aborigines who had accepted the over-lordship of the Indo-Aryans and had entered into their service is more than probable It will have been noticed that in the earliest literature only the first three classes—the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, and the Vaisya—are postulated and that it is only in one place, which is regarded by most Vedic scholars to be chronologically one of the latest, that the Śūdra class is mentioned as one of the four It has not been found possible yet to give a satisfactory derivation of the word Śūdra in terms of Sanskritic roots Further, when this fourth class is definitely formulated the brahmanic literature contemplates it as in contradistinction to the other three classes Thus the Vedic opposition between the Ārya and the Dāsa is replaced by the brahmanic classification of the "dvijāti" and the "ekajāti" (the Śūdra), suggesting the transmutation of the Dāsa into the Śūdra in the minds of the writers of the Brahmanic and later periods

As an important constituent of the Brahmanic culture in connection with the sacrificial ritual there arose very exaggerated notions of ceremonial purity Not only the correct wording and pronunciation of the sacred formulæ but also the strictest adherence to the minutest details of the ritual procedure were essential for the proper performance of rites Distinctions began to be made between things pure and things impure Whatever was unclean was of course impure But with the change of outlook on the animal world even some of the formerly honourable occupations came to be looked upon as degrading How fastidious the Brahmanic ideal of ceremonial purity had come to be by the time of the Sūtras is best illustrated by the meticulous rules laid down in them for purification and for general conduct

The Brahmins, partly out of their honest desire to preserve the purity of Vedic ritual, partly being the victims of their own ideas of ceremonial purity, and partly also owing to their consciousness of superiority over the aborigines, first enacted rules for the guidance of their own members, and intended to prevent the possibility of the Śūdras in any

way lowering their moral standard and introducing their low blood

It is because the Brahmins put restrictions on the acceptance of food and drink from the Śūdras during the second stage of the development of their culture that we find that in Northern India generally there is some leniency shown by them towards some of the higher castes, while in Southern India such an attitude and practice is considered a great sacrilege As the taboo was laid against the Śūdra, and as the Brahmin most probably continued to treat the other two castes as almost his own equals in this matter, even when in later times the taboo became stricter and was made widely applicable, by force of habit and tradition, he continued to take water from pure castes and specially prepared food from high castes When the pioneers of brahmanic culture progressed into Southern India with restrictions against food and water from the Śūdra as one of the items of their tradition, as they had none of the other castes—the Kshatriya and the Vaisya—to whom they were accustomed, to think of in their new regions, they applied their rules against the Śūdras to all the indigenous population of the Southern countries And the seed fell on a very congenial soil The Southern peoples before their contact with the Indo-Aryan culture most probably had beliefs about the sanctity and power of food to transmit certain qualities very much like those of primitive peoples [1] This is why the restrictions on food and drink are so rigorous in South India, where, as we said, the Brahmin does not accept food or water at the hands of anyone but a Brahmin

With the progressive assimilation of the Vaisyas with the Śūdras the Brahmins enacted rules to keep their group free from admixture with them by assigning different status to the issue of the union of a Brahmin male and a Vaiśya female And with the march of time and particularly after the overthrow of Buddhism they stopped taking food at the hands of the Vaisyas Owing to the peculiar position of the Kshatriyas, the king having belonged to that group, in theory

[1] A E Crawley, *The Mystic Rose*, 1902, pp 157–60 On p 162 he thus summarizes the attitude towards food " It is clear that men believe human properties to be transmitted not only by contact with the food of others, but by eating with them or in their presence "

at least the Brahmins did not prohibit food being taken at their hands Yet they tried to preserve their racial purity by treating the offspring of a Brahmin male and a Kshatriya female as belonging to a separate group

The restrictions on intermarriage and on food were thus in their origin the outcome of the desire of the Brahmins to keep themselves pure This desire was partly due to the exaggerated notions of purity, partly to the enormous importance that came to be attached to the perpetuation of Vedic lore without even the slightest change, and in part also to the pride of superiority, which the Brahmins had shared in common with the other Indo Aryan classes in the beginning, and which they alone could keep unimpaired The total discomfiture of the Kshatriyas and the complete dissociation of the language of the people from the old language of the scriptures made it easy for the Brahmins to have it all their own way

It must, however, be said to the credit of the Brahmins that they did not quite forget the original solidarity of the first three classes They tried to preserve the purity, on their model of course, of both the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas at least in their ideal scheme, though they treated the latter for all practical purposes as equal to the Śūdras

This social pattern set for themselves by the most respected class in society could not fail to be imitated with fervid enthusiasm by all manner of groups that would claim respectability Thus it must have been that the original restrictions on intermarriage and regulations about the acceptance of food, which contemplated only four classes in society, came to be the characteristics of each and every well-marked group

Group solidarity and group prestige would soon assert themselves against marrying on unequal terms the lower group would refuse to marry their females to the males of the higher classes only to create a new group giving itself superior airs It was bound to close up its ranks and be endogamous

With functional differentiation in society there came into being separate occupational groups with more or less distinct interests We have noticed it as a widespread feature of ancient and medieval society that the occupation of each group tends to become customarily hereditary among its

members Only the Brahmins reserved as their monopoly the occupation of a priest No doubt they were in the beginning inspired by the laudable motive of preserving the all-important sacred lore But later on equally clearly they looked upon their priestcraft as their monopolistic activity and rigorously kept it up, while the traditional occupations of the other two castes were progressively encroached upon by other castes There is also a natural inclination for each occupational group, as we have already noticed, to be habitually endogamous Both these tendencies became rules the former more or less nebulous, and the latter very rigid, after the pattern of the Brahmins Occupations thus became endogamous groups

The attitude of respect for details, that was first fostered in connection with ritual, became the prevailing attitude in social behaviour Adherence to details of social and customary etiquette became the distinguishing mark of membership of a group Distinction in any detail tended to be translated into separateness of membership and hence of a group

The lack of rigid unitary control of the State, the unwillingness of the rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom, their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid, and their usual practice of allowing things somehow to adjust themselves,[1] helped the fissiparous tendency of groups and fostered the spirit of solidarity and community feeling in every group

Both these circumstances conspired to encourage the formation of small groups based on petty distinctions

Special rights for the higher classes and disabilities on the lower ones was almost a universal feature of class-society, and the Brahmanic theory of four castes with their rights and disabilities does not call for any special explanation Only the practice of untouchability is peculiar to the Hindu system It will have been clear from the history of this factor of caste, narrated in the third and fourth chapters, that the ideas of untouchability and unapproachability arose out of the ideas of ceremonial purity, first applied to the aboriginal Śūdras

[1] See V A Gadgil in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1926, p 161, for the connection of this practice with the village organization of Northern India

in connection with the sacrificial ritual and expanded and extended to other groups because of the theoretical impurity of certain occupations

Multiplicity of the groups and the thoroughness of the whole system are due to the habit of the Hindu mind to create categories and to carry things to their logical end which characterized their literature, philosophy, and religious creeds [1]

[1] Professor C G Seligman attributes this mental trait to the Nordic race (see his presidential address to the Royal Anthropological Institute, *JRAI* 1924)

CHAPTER VIII

CASTE RECENT AND CONTEMPORARY

WE have seen that the Brahmin was at the apex of the hierarchical organization of caste and that the Hindu kings upheld the institution with the help of their civil power With the advent of the British as the political head of society things were bound to take on a different aspect The British brought with them their own traditional form of government, and as Christians they could not have much sympathy with the institutions of the Hindus As prudent foreigners wishing to consolidate their power over a strange land and people they decided to leave the peculiar institutions of the country severely alone except where they egregiously violated their cherished ideas of government They introduced a system of education which did not demand of the learners any change of religion Ideas and behaviour patterns, very different from those to which the people were accustomed, were thus presented as isolated from religion The policy of comparative non interference naturally gave scope for the revolt of the castes that were not quite comfortable under the Brahmin supremacy Later on with the incoming of the modern industrial organization and the growth of industrial cities, large numbers of peoples congregated in cities of mixed populations, away from the influence of their homes and unobserved by their caste or village people This is the background of the picture of contemporary caste In this chapter we shall trace the consequences of these circumstances on our institution

Early in the history of the British rule the practice of the rulers over the three Presidencies was not uniform In Bengal one of the Regulations, while recognizing the integrity of caste organization, allowed suits for restoration of caste to be entertained by the ordinary courts [1] It was held that cases of expulsion from clubs or voluntary associations were of an entirely different nature from excommunication from

[1] Kikani, p iii

caste.[1] In Bombay, however, the pertinent regulation expressly provides that no court shall interfere in any caste question, "beyond the admission and trial of any suit instituted for the recovery of damages on account of the alleged injury to the caste and character of the plaintiff arising from some illegal act of the other party".[2] Social privileges of the membership of a caste are held to be wholly within the jurisdiction of the caste. It is only when a complainant alleges that a legal right either of property or of office is violated by his exclusion from the caste that a suit may be entertained by a court of law.[3] This autonomy of caste, it is further held, exists only under the law and not against it. Hence caste-proceedings must be according to usage, giving reasonable opportunity of explanation to the person concerned and must not be influenced by malice.[4]

This recognition of the integrity of caste for internal affairs did not protect the institution from inroads on some of its very vital powers. The establishment of British courts, administering a uniform criminal law, removed from the purview of caste many matters that used to be erstwhile adjudicated on by it. Questions of assault, adultery, rape, and the like were taken before the British courts for decision, and the caste councils in proportion lost their former importance. Even in matters of civil law, such as marriage, divorce, etc., though the avowed intention of the British was to be guided by caste-customs, slowly but surely various decisions of the High Courts practically set aside the authority of caste.

The first British administrators on the Bombay side employed, as early as 1826, officials like Borradaile and Steele, to make compilations of the various usages and customs of the many castes of the presidency. These pains-taking officers made useful compilations. But similar compendiums were not prepared in other provinces. The result was that the Widow-remarriage Act of 1856 contained clauses practically violating the customs of some of the so called lower castes. While legalizing the marriage of a Hindu widow, this Act deprived such a remarried widow of all her rights and interests in her deceased husband's property

[1] Kikani, p. 7.
[2] Kikani, p. iii.
[3] Kikani, p. 132.
[4] Ibid., p. xii.

Fortunately the courts have taken a reasonable view of these sections of the Act and have decreed that the Act with its restrictive clauses applies only to those widows who could not, without the aid of this Act, remarry according to their caste-usage Widows of castes allowing remarriage forfeited their rights and interests in their deceased husband's property only when caste-usage enjoined such forfeiture [1]

So early as 1876, the High Court of Bombay ruled that "Courts of law will not recognize the authority of a caste to declare a marriage void, or to give permission to a woman to remarry" [2] When any caste-council, in utter ignorance of its changed status, ventures to step in as a tribunal to try one of its defaulting members, it is promptly made to realize the force of law It is well known that one of the most usual methods in the old regime of detecting an offence was to submit the accused person to an ordeal of varying intensity Recently the caste-council of Pakhah Rajputs of Ahmedabad submitted a man and his mother, both accused of witchcraft, to an ordeal usual in such cases As one of the suspects failed to come out successful, the council demanded penalty for the alleged crime A suit was filed for recovery of this penalty but was dismissed as being against policy Thereupon one of the persons lodged a complaint for defamation against the persons who had complained against them to the caste-council [3]

The hereditary and prescriptive right of the Brahmins to act as priests to all castes of the Hindus, with only a few exceptions, has been the one uniform and general principle inhering in caste-society through all its vicissitudes Later on we shall describe the attitude of the people towards this question, but here we should like to point out how certain decisions of the High Courts have emboldened the non-brahmanic castes to dislodge the Brahmins from their monopoly of priesthood In Bengal and in North India generally it is now settled that there is no office of priest recognized as such in law, and a householder may employ anyone he likes for the performance of any priestly service and pay the fees to him A similar view has been taken in the Madras Presidency [4] When in the Maratha country the

[1] Mayne, pp 779–82
[2] Mandlik, p 430
[3] *The Times of India* (Bombay), 30th June, 1928
[4] Kikani, p vi

non-Brahmin reformists started the practice of performing their religious rites without the aid of the Brahmin priests, the latter lodged a complaint asking for an injunction against the persons so violating their rights The High Court of Bombay decreed that people could engage any priest they liked, and were not at all bound to call for the services of the hereditary priests, but unlike the High Court of Madras, they decreed that the hereditary priest must be paid some fees by way of compensation [1]

This opens the way to the dissolution of the only bond holding together the diverse castes, viz the employment of common priesthood

The Caste-Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 dealt another blow at the integrity of caste The Act does not, as may be expected from its title, remove civil disabilities existing between caste and caste, but facilitates conversion to another religion or admission into another caste Notwithstanding any custom of caste disinheriting a person for change of caste or religion, this Act provides that a person does not forfeit his ordinary rights of property by loss of caste or change of religion

Regarding the most important aspect, and almost the only surviving one, viz that of prohibition against marriage outside the caste, the practice of the British courts has varied In some early cases it was held that marriages between persons belonging to different divisions of the Brahmins or the Śūdras were invalid unless specially sanctioned by custom, but recent decisions decree otherwise In a Madras case when a Hindu, belonging to the Śūdra class, married a Christian woman, turned into a Hindu, the marriage was accepted as one between members of different divisions of the Śūdra class and therefore valid Integrity of caste was so far recognized that the Court held that where a caste regards marriage as valid and treats the parties as its members, the court cannot declare it null and void [2]

Social reformers, however, were not satisfied with the existing state of affairs, and legislators tried to introduce bills legalizing intercaste marriages The Special Marriage Act of 1872 made it possible for an Indian of whatever caste

[1] Latthe, vol ii, p 373 [2] Mayne, pp 108–9

or creed to enter into a valid marriage with a person belonging to any caste or creed, provided the parties registered the contract of marriage, declaring *inter alia* that they did not belong to any caste or religion The clause requiring the solemn renunciation of caste and religion by the parties to a civil marriage was considered a great hardship and a moral dilemma by all progressive elements in the country To add to this grievance, members of the Brahmo Samaj, who were regarded as outside the purview of this Act, were held, by a decision of the Privy Council to be Hindus for the purposes of the Act Marriages of Brahmo-Samajists could no longer be valid unless the parties signed a declaration that they did not belong to any caste or religion Continued agitation was carried on by reformers to liberalize the marriage law Owing partially to the apathy of the Government and the hostility of the conservative section of the Hindus, both B N Basu and Mr V J Patel, one after the other, failed in their efforts in this direction It was only in the Reformed Legislature that Sir Hari Sing Gour succeeded in getting a pertinent bill passed into law, though not in the original form intended by the first reformers It is known as the Special Marriage Amendment Act of 1923 It applies only to Hindus including Jains, Sikhs, and Brahmos Persons marrying under the provisions of this Act, to whatever caste they may belong, need not make the declaration prescribed in the Act of 1872 This advantage, however, is gained not without a substantial sacrifice If two Hindus belonging to different castes marry under this Act they are not required to renounce their religion in declaration but have to forfeit certain of their personal rights as Hindus They cannot adopt On their marriage they cease to be the members of the joint family to which they previously belonged Whatever rights in the property of the family would have accrued to them by survivorship under the Hindu Law cease As regards their own property they will be governed by the Indian Succession Act and not by the Hindu Law [1]

Under the old regime of caste certain sections of Hindu society which were regarded as untouchable were devoid

[1] *The Legislative Assembly Debates,* vol iii, pp 3899–926

of many of the civil rights The question of removing their disabilities and placing them on a footing of civil equality came up for consideration before the British administrators In 1856 the Government of Bombay had to consider the case of a Mahar boy, who was refused admission to the Government School at Dharwar The principle involved in the case occupied the attention of the Government for about two years Finally in 1858 it was announced in a press-note that "although the Governor-in-Council does not contemplate the introduction of low caste pupils into schools, the expenses of which are shared with Government by local contributors and patrons who object to such a measure, he reserves to himself the full right of refusing the support of Government to any partially aided school in which the benefits of education are withheld from any class of persons on account of caste or race, and further resolves that all schools maintained at the sole cost of Government shall be open to all classes of its subjects without distinction"[1] In a press note of 1915 we still find the complaint that contact with Western civilization and English education had not successfully combated the old ideas about untouchability It further refers to the "familiar sight of Mahar and other depressed class boys in village schools where the boys are often not allowed to enter the schoolroom but are accommodated outside the room on the verandah" In 1923 the Government issued a resolution that no grants would be paid to any aided educational institution which refused admission to the children of the Depressed Classes By this time the practice of segregating the Depressed Class boys was fast disappearing especially in the Central Division of the Presidency In many Local Board and Municipal schools Depressed Class pupils are now allowed to sit in their classes like boys and girls of the caste Hindus

While the Bombay Government was thus enforcing the right of the Depressed Classes to equal treatment, the Madras

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31st March, 1921

N B —John Wilson wrote in 1877 "Few, if any, of the Antyaja are found in Government schools This is to be ascribed not only to the Brahmanical fear of contamination and the general caste prejudices of the people, but to the want of firmness on the part of the Government educational authorities as has been the case in some instances of the agents of the missionary bodies" (*Indian Caste*, vol ii, p 45)

Government had on its Statute-book so late as the end of 1923 a law empowering village Magistrates to punish the offenders of the lower castes by imprisonment in the stocks, though the Government had definitely pledged itself in 1914 to discontinue this inhuman practice[1] In 1925 a Bill was introduced in the Madras Legislative Council to put under statute the principle of a resolution passed in the previous session of the Council throwing open all public roads, streets, or pathways, giving access to any public office, well, tank, or place of public resort, to all classes of people including the Depressed[2]

In the Reformed Constitution the Depressed Classes have special representation in Local and Legislative bodies by nomination

The majority of the castes which were under various disabilities, excluding the Depressed Classes, were non-Brahmin The uniform laws of the British did not recognize any of these disabilities as lawful Yet the services were mainly manned by Brahmin and allied castes, who were the first to profit by English education Their traditional attitude towards caste naturally influenced their dealings with the non-Brahmin classes This situation gradually awakened some of the non-Brahmin leaders and sympathetic officers of the Government to demand special treatment to those half-submerged classes As a response, Chatfield, the Director of Public Instruction in Bombay, allowed in 1878 some concessions in the matter of fees in primary schools to the boys of some of these castes Later on were instituted scholarships in secondary schools and colleges for boys from some of these classes

The early non-Brahmin leaders had also urged upon the Government the necessity of special representation for their members both in the administrative bodies as well as in the services For a pretty long time this appeal remained unheeded The cry was, however, taken up by the late Maharaja of Kolhapur,[3] and a strong case for it was made by him at the time when Montague came to India to consult

[1] *Forward* (Calcutta), 7th November, 1923
Bombay Chronicle, 1st May, 1925
[3] *Memorandum prepared by the Government of Bombay for Submission to the Indian Statutory Commission, 1928*, (1929), p 228

the people and the Government of India as regards the future form of Government In the reformed constitution framed by Montague and Lord Chelmsford special representation through mixed electorates was conceded to the non-Brahmins Under these provisions the whole Hindu populace in the Bombay Presidency is divided into three sections Brahmins and allied castes the intermediate classes formed by Marathas and others, and the backward classes including the so-called untouchables [1] This classification, with the addition of other Indians like the Parsis in the appropriate sections, is also followed in recruiting the various services A Resolution of the Government of Bombay Finance Department, dated 17th September, 1923, expressly prohibits recruitment to the lower services from the advanced class of Brahmins and others till a certain proportion of the posts are held by members of the intermediate and backward classes [2] It is because of this avowed intention of the Government to see certain castes represented in the services of the Province that heads of Government Institutions, while inviting applications for vacancies under their charge require the applicant to state his caste and sub-caste [3]

British administrators, following the popular practice, have used caste names as a convenient mode of description of persons The Police Reports while giving details about offenders also mention their caste The Railway risk-note, that every sender of parcels has to fill in and sign, had, at least till very recently, an entry for the caste of the sender [4] This cannot be regarded as intended to give or elicit information as regards the person's occupation There is a separate entry provided to describe one's profession Perhaps the caste-entry has been inserted to enable the officers concerned to form a rough estimate of the moral character of the person

The unique institution of caste did not fail to arouse intellectual curiosity among the more intelligent of the Britishers in India, officials as well as non-officials, and our

[1] Ibid, p 44

[2] This resolution was modified by a later one, dated 5th February, 1925 wherein the absolute restriction on the recruitment from the advanced classes was removed

[3] See notices by the Dean of the Grant Medical College and the Principal of the Gujarat College in the *Times of India*, 26th April, 1926

[4] G I P Railway Risk-note Form "B" B I P —176–9–24–30000

understanding of the institution is largely helped by their work Some of the early officials like Elliot, Dalton, Sherring, and Nesfield, evinced their interest in the subject by collecting information and publishing it with their comments Later officials, however, adopted the easier method of utilizing the decennial census for collecting and presenting the information and indulging in the theories of the origins of caste [1] This procedure reached its culmination in the Census of 1901 under the guidance of Sir Herbert Risley of ethnographic fame With a view to help "us towards presenting an intelligible picture of the social grouping of that large proportion of the people of India which is organized, admittedly or tacitly, on the basis of caste" the Census Commissioner changed the classification of 1891 into one based on "social precedence as recognized by the native public opinion at the present day and manifesting itself in the facts that particular castes are supposed to be the modern representatives of one or other of the castes of the theoretical Hindu system" And this procedure Risley chose in spite of his clear admission that even in this caste-ridden society a person, when questioned about his caste, may offer a bewildering variety of replies "He may give the name of a sect, of a sub-caste, of an exogamous sect or section, of a hypergamous group, he may mention some titular designation which sounds finer than the name of his caste, he may describe himself by his occupation or by the province or tract of country from which he comes" [2] Various ambitious castes quickly perceived the chances of raising their status They invited conferences of their members, and formed councils to take steps to see that their status was recorded in the way they thought was honourable to them Other castes that could not but resent this "stealthy" procedure to advance, equally eagerly began to controvert their claims Thus a campaign of mutual recrimination was set on foot "The leaders of all but the highest castes frankly looked upon the Census as an opportunity for pressing and perhaps obtaining some recognition of social claims which were denied by persons of castes higher than their own" [3] In 1911 the Census-reporter for Madras wrote the following

[1] See Kitts, p 1 [2] *India Census*, 1901, pp 537–8
[3] *Bengal Census*, 1921 p 346

"It has been pointed out to me by an Indian gentleman that the last few years, and especially the occasion of the present census, have witnessed an extraordinary revival of the caste spirit in certain aspects. For numerous castes 'Sabhas' have sprung up, each keen to assert the dignity of the social group which it represents." [1]

It is difficult to see any valid public reason for this elaborate treatment of caste in the Census-reports. The Government have never avowed their intention of helping every caste to retain its numbers and prosperity. Nor have they any time helped a particular caste because it registered numerical decline or economic dislocation. Not even the declared policy of the Provincial Governments to provide special representation either by election or nomination to certain classes of people necessitates an enumeration of the people by their castes. For this representation is not dependent on numbers. It is not proportional. All that the particular officers of the Government have to do is to determine in the light of their experience whether a particular person is one who can legitimately claim to belong to one of the three large groups of the population, devised for political purposes. And a Court of Law in any disputed case will settle the point by reference to the usual practice of the people. The conclusion is unavoidable that the intellectual curiosity of some of the early officials is mostly responsible for the treatment of caste given to it in the Census, which has been progressively elaborate in each successive Census since 1872. The total result has been, as we have seen, a livening up of the caste-spirit.

In the old regime one caste used to petition the sovereign to restrain another caste from carrying a procession through a particular street or from using a particular mark. Such cases are on record in the Diaries of the Peshwas. The British Government in India by their declared policy effectively discouraged such interference and thus removed some of the occasions for a demonstration of the bitter caste-spirit. On the other hand, the desire of the Census officials to give an intelligible picture of caste by means of nice grading of contemporary groups has provided a good rallying point for the old caste-spirit.

[1] *Madras Census*, 1911, p. 178.

The one undisputed consequence of the promulgation of a uniform law and of certain administrative measures has been the removal of almost all the legal inequality in the treatment of different castes—particularly the so-called low-castes Only in the case of the Depressed castes has the Government not proceeded to the logical end One of the disabilities that these castes, which are proud to call themselves Hindus, and which the higher castes eagerly claim as of their fold in a controversy about political representation of the Hindus, is that they are denied access to Hindu temples They are required to stop outside the temple proper in the compound and satisfy themselves that they have had a glimpse of the idol of God A devout Hindu feels very strongly that his homage and prayer to God must be paid in full sight of the idol of God Hindu religion is not an established church There are temples for the idols of God maintained by private individuals or by public trusts The latter sometimes receive grants from the State The famous temple of Parvatī at Poona is such a one The Depressed classes want to visit the temple as other caste-Hindus do The trustees refuse to allow them the right The Government of Bombay, who make a substantial grant towards the maintenance of the temple, have not yet thought fit to intervene as a matter of public policy We fail to see how the Government, that has accepted the principle that whichever institution is maintained either wholly or partially with the help of public money must impose no bar on any person merely because of his caste or creed, can contemplate with unconcern the distressing plight of the Depressed classes for a practical demonstration of their elementary rights It is clearly the duty of the Government, still sadly undischarged, to declare that the problem of access to the Hindu temples that receive any support out of the public money, must be solved on a basis agreed to by the representatives of all the classes of the Hindus, and that failing such an agreement, grants of money from public funds should be stopped

The British Government, we have seen, did not recognize caste as a unit empowered to administer justice Caste was thus shorn of one of its important functions as a community Individual members might, therefore, be

expected to feel less of the old feeling of solidarity for their caste-group. But nothing of the kind is observed to have taken place.[1] First, though a caste could not administer justice, the Government would not set aside the customs of a caste in matters of civil law unless they were opposed to public policy. Caste thus retained its cultural integrity. Secondly, many other aspects of the British Administration, some of which like the Census have been dealt with above, provided more than sufficient incentive for the consolidation of the caste group. Mr Middleton, one of the two Superintendents of Census Operations of 1921, makes eloquent remarks about the effects of the British Administration on caste in the Punjab. He observes: "I had intended pointing out that there is a very wide revolt against the classification of occupational castes; that these castes have been largely manufactured and almost entirely preserved as separate castes by the British Government. Our land records and official documents have added iron bonds to the old rigidity of caste. Caste in itself was rigid among the higher castes, but malleable amongst the lower. We pigeon-holed every one by caste, and if we could not find a true caste for them, labelled them with the name of an hereditary occupation. We deplore the caste-system and its effects on social and economic problems, but we are largely responsible for the system which we deplore. Left to themselves such castes as Sunar and Lohar would rapidly disappear and no one would suffer. Government's passion for labels and pigeon-holes has led to a crystallization of the caste system, which, except amongst the aristocratic castes, was really very fluid under indigenous rule. If the Government would ignore caste it would gradually be replaced by something very different amongst the lower castes."[2] The situation in the Punjab, cannot be taken as typical of other provinces. It is well known that the Punjab was not much influenced by rigid caste-system. Yet the process of pigeon-holing and thus stereotyping has undoubtedly counteracted whatever good results might have ensued from the dethronement of caste as a unit

[1] During the recent Civil Disobedience movement the influence of caste was clearly visible in Gujarat.

[2] *Punjab Census*, 1921, pp. 343–4. The last remark of Mr Middleton appears to us to be an overstatement even in the case of the Punjab, where caste has been more fluid than elsewhere in India.

of the administration of justice [1] The total effect has been, at the least, to keep caste-solidarity quite intact [2]

The relations of an individual member to a group in which he is born, and to which he is bound by ties, traditional, sentimental, and cultural, in a society where almost everyone belongs to one of such groups, and none can hope to have any respectable status without his group, are such that they are not susceptible to change as a result of legal enactment, administrative rules, or judicial decisions Though caste has ceased to be a unit administering justice, yet it has not lost its hold on its individual members, who still continue to be controlled by the opinion of the caste The picture of the control of an individual's activities by his caste, given in 1925 by an eminent social worker of Gujarat, convinces one, by its close similarity with our description of caste of the middle of the nineteenth century, that as regards at least this aspect of caste, there has been almost no change during the course of three-quarters of a century She observes "On our side of the country, I mean in Gujarat, the greatest hindrance to all social reforms is the caste If I want to educate my girl, the caste would step in and say you should not do it If I wish to postpone my children's marriage till they are sufficiently grown up, the caste would raise its hand and forbid me If a widow chooses to marry again and settle respectably in her home the caste would threaten to ostracize her If a young man wishes to go to Europe for bettering his own or the country's prospects, the caste would, though perhaps nowadays give him a hearty send-off, yet close its doors on him when he returns If a respectable man of the so-considered Untouchable class is invited to a house, the caste would deliver its judgment against that householder and condemn him as unfit for any intercourse" [3]

It must have become clear by now that the activities of

[1] N B —We are glad to note that as a result of the agitation carried on by the Jat Pat Torak Mandal of Lahore the Government of India made some concession in the matter of the filling in of the column for caste at the Census of 1931 in the case of persons who do not conform to the practices of their caste

[2] Compare J Murdoch, *Caste*, 1887, pp 38–42, and also the quotation from Sherring therein, and Rev John Morrison, *New Ideas in India* 1906, p 83

[3] Lady Vidyagauri Ramanbhai as reported in the *Indian Social Reformer* (Bombay), 5th September, 1925

the British Government have gone very little towards the solution of the problem of caste Most of these activities, as must be evident, were dictated by prudence of administration and not by a desire to reduce the rigidity of caste, whose disadvantages were so patent to them The most important step they have taken is the recent regulation in some of the Provinces that a definite percentage of posts in the various services shall be filled from the members of the non-Brahmin or the intermediate castes, provided they have the minimum qualifications This was originally the demand of the leaders of the non-Brahmin movement And it is the most obvious remedy against caste-domination But the obvious is not necessarily the wisest We contend that the restriction on the numbers of the able members of the Brahmin and the allied castes, imposed by this resolution of the Government, penalizes some able persons simply because they happen to belong to particular castes When in the case of certain services recruited by means of competitive examinations, some vacancies are offered to candidates who have failed to attain a particular rank in the examination, on the ground that they belong to certain castes, which must be represented in the higher services of the country, it clearly implies that even the accepted standard of qualifications and efficiency is abandoned The result has been the pampering of caste even at the cost of efficiency and justice The Government of Bombay, in their memorandum submitted to the Indian Statutory Commission, 1928 (p 94), complain that the District School Boards, where the non-Brahmins have had a majority, " have almost in every case attempted to oust the Brahmins regardless of all consideration of efficiency " Yet this action is only a logical development of the attitude of the Government which nursed, rather than ignored, the spirit of caste

On the whole, the British rulers of India, who have throughout professed to be the trustees of the welfare of the country, never seem to have given much thought to the problem of caste, in so far as it affects the nationhood of India Nor have they shown willingness to take a bold step rendering caste innocuous Their measures generally have been promulgated piecemeal and with due regard to the safety of British domination

It may be argued that, if the British masters of India did not take any comprehensive steps to minimize the evil effects of caste which they openly deplored, it must be said to their credit that they did not at least consciously foster the institution. But in the face of the utterances of some responsible British officers, after the Mutiny of 1857 was quelled, it is not possible to endorse this view. The Mutiny opened the eyes of the administrators of the country as well as of the students of British Indian history to the potentialities of caste. It was almost the unanimous opinion of persons connected with the Government of India that the deep causes of the Mutiny were to be found in the fact that the Bengal Army was composed largely of the higher castes, viz. the Brahmins and the Rajputs. The special Commission presided over by Lord Peel, which was appointed to suggest a reorganization of the Indian Army, took evidence from many high officials who were sometime or other closely connected with India. Lord Elphinstone opined that it was desirable that men of different castes should be enlisted in the Army, while Major-General H. T. Tucker went further and insisted on the necessity of keeping the country under British domination through the policy of dividing and separating into distinct bodies the nationalities and castes recruited to the Army. Such being the general tenor of the main bulk of evidence the Commission recommended that "The Native Indian army should be composed of different nationalities and castes and as a general rule mixed promiscuously through each regiment." Lord Ellenborough advised the same, but clearly pointed out that the recommendation was based solely on the ground of British interests and not on the consideration of efficiency of the Army. He lamented the fact that if the suggested procedure were adopted "we must abandon the hope of ever again seeing a native army composed like that we have lost. It was an army which, under a General that it loved and trusted, would have marched victorious to the Dardanelles."[1] Ever since then the Indian Army has been studiously purged of the higher castes. The lesson of the Mutiny, viz. that the safety of the British domination in India was very closely

[1] *Report of the Peel Commission on the Organization of the Indian Army*, 1859, p. 14, and Appendix, pp. 6, 10, 147.

connected with keeping the Indian people divided on the lines of caste, was driven home to the British rulers Some officials like Sir Lepel Griffin thought that caste was useful in preventing rebellion,[1] while James Kerr, the Principal of the Hindu College at Calcutta, wrote the following in 1865 "It may be doubted if the existence of caste is on the whole unfavourable to the permanence of our rule It may even be considered favourable to it, provided we act with prudence and forbearance Its spirit is opposed to national union "[2] The maxim of "divide and rule" began to be preached by historians and journalists alike[3] Because the Mutiny was largely the work of soldiers of the high castes of Brahmins and Rajputs, there was a clamour in England that the high caste sepoys should be exterminated[4] Suspicion of high castes therefore dates from the Mutiny The valuable lesson so dearly purchased was not going to be lost It being repeated in the form of the general principle of "divide and rule" could not have failed to influence the policy and conduct of later officials It is well to remember in this connection that even the Roman Church, in its desire to propagate its faith, was prepared to accommodate caste in its practical programme, though it was opposed to the humanitarian principles of the Church Pope Gregory XV published a bull sanctioning caste regulations in the Christian Churches of India[5]

The British brought with them a casteless culture and a literature full of thoughts on individual liberty With the introduction of English education many of the intelligent minds of the country came in closer contact with the religion of the rulers and some outstanding personalities amongst them As a result some Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore started movements which aimed at liberalizing religion and practising the brotherhood of man The Brahmo Samaj had not only monotheism to preach but also to establish a brotherhood wherein man shall not be divided from man because of caste The Bombay

[1] *Vide* Murdoch, *Caste*, p 43
[2] Kerr, p 361, footnote
[3] L J Trotter, *History of India under Queen Victoria*, vol ii, 1886, p 91 and *The Times of India*, 3rd July, 1897 (leading article)
[4] Edward Sullivan, *Letters on India*, 1858, pp 124–5
[5] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th Ed, vol v, p 468 (*a*)

Prarthana Samaj, inspired by the ideals of Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, has also thrown caste overboard as far as its tenets go While this movement of repudiating caste was being fostered, other capable Hindu minds thought of remodelling Hindu society after the pristine ideals supposed to be enshrined in the Vedas Swami Dayanand preached that the fourfold division of the Hindu people should be substituted for the manifold ramifications of contemporary caste The one important innovation that this school of thought carried out in their programme of reconstruction was that even the fourth class of the Hindu society, viz the Śūdras, could study the Vedas[1] Viewing both these movements as an outsider one cannot but be impressed by the manifest success of the Arya Samaj movement of Swami Dayananda Speaking of the Prarthana Samaj of Bombay, it will be very hard to point out examples from among its high-caste leaders, who, when they had to arrange for the marriages of their sons or daughters, made any effort to practise the ideal they preached Nay, some of the eminent leaders of the Samaj while openly denouncing caste, busied themselves with the affairs of the caste-groups in which they were born The greater popularity of the Arya Samaj, compared with that of the Prarthana Samaj, is due to the following reasons First, the Arya Samaj tried to revive the ancient purity of the Vedic society and thus appealed to the traditional sentiment of the people, secondly, the sincerity of the members of the Arya Samaj was much better demonstrated in actual practice, and thirdly, its chief centre of activity was transferred to the Punjab, where caste has been flexible

Movements against caste of a more militant nature were not slow to arise In 1873 Jyotirao Phooley of Poona, though a man of Mali caste and of comparatively little education, started an association of members called the Satyashodhak Samaj with the purpose of asserting the worth of man irrespective of caste The breadth of his vision and the extent of his reforming activities led him to proclaim in his books and to carry out in his practice a revolt against the tyranny of the caste-system He exhorted the

[1] See the account of the Arya Samaj given by Pandit Harikishan Kaul in the *Punjab Census Report* for 1911, pp 183–6

non-Brahmin castes not to engage any Brahmin priest to conduct their marriage ritual, which he tried to reduce to a very simple procedure He had perceived the necessity of educating the class of people to whom his appeal was directed, and had started primary schools both for boys and girls of the non-Brahmin castes as early as 1848 The catholicity of his mind is further proved by the fact that Phooley started in 1851 a primary school for the so-called untouchables in Poona, the very centre of orthodoxy, where, only fifty years before that, persons of these castes could not even move about during the best part of the day

Phooley's was a revolt against caste in so far as caste denied ordinary human rights to all the members of Hindu society, and not merely a non-Brahmin movement to cast off the domination of the Brahmins In his writings he demanded representation for all classes of the Hindus in all the local bodies, the services, and the institutions [1] The movement did not receive any support from the Brahmins in general Only stray individuals like Ranade showed sympathy with it Even among the non-Brahmins the progress of Phooley's ideas was slow It was the late Maharaja of Kolhapur who infused new life into the agitation, so much so that Montague and Chelmsford, in their Indian political reforms, had to grant some of the demands [2]

It would be interesting to know the ideas of the late Maharaja of Kolhapur, who did so much for the recognition of the non-Brahmin movement On the eve of the announcement of the Indian reforms he said "If castes remain as they are, Home Rule in the sense it is meant will result in nothing but a kind of oligarchy This of course does not mean, I may tell once more, that I am against Home Rule Surely we want it Under the present circumstances, however, we must have the protection and guidance of the British Government until the evil of caste-system becomes ineffective To prevent Home Rule from culminating in oligarchy, we must have communal representation at least for ten years

[1] Phooley, pp 25, 33, 59, 63

This demand for representation in the services was first made in a petition addressed by the artisan castes of Madras to the Board of Revenue in 1840 All classes of men, to the destruction of Brahmanical monopoly, should be appointed to public offices without distinction" John Wilson, *Indian Caste*, vol ii, p 89, footnote

It will teach us what our rights are. Once we know them, communal representation can be dispensed with."[1]

The purpose for which this staunch advocate of the non-Brahmin movement urged communal representation is by now more than achieved. An analysis of the membership of the various local bodies in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras clearly proves that the non-Brahmins know their rights and are generally keen to conduct a strong campaign against any measure which they feel unjust to them. A number of motions tabled and questions asked in the Bombay Legislative Council tell the same story.[2] The activity of a Madras association of non-Brahmins and handicraftsmen further illustrates this. One Brahmin member of the Government of Madras during Lord Pentland's tenure issued an order that the Vishwakarmans—handicraftsmen—must not suffix the word "Achary" to their names but that they must continue to use the traditional word "Asary". The said association memorialized to the Governor, as the word "Asary" carried some odium in the eyes of the people, protesting against the order, which they described as a stab in the dark. Not being able to move the Governor to cancel the order they sent a petition to the Secretary of State.[3]

Rao Bahadur A. B. Latthe, the biographer of the late Maharaja of Kolhapur, evidently realizing that the case for special representation cannot be sanctioned on the plea urged by his late hero, seeks other grounds—grounds that one knowing Indian conditions is sure to declare as likely to continue for at least a few generations—to support a worse form of special representation. He observes, "Unless, among the Hindus, caste disappears altogether, there is little chance of avoiding political expedients, like communal electorates though their harmful results are obvious."[4]

There are other leaders of the non-Brahmins who are at pains to proclaim that their movement, including their

[1] Latthe, vol ii, p. 494.
[2] *Memorandum submitted by the Government of Bombay to the Indian Statutory Commission*, 1928, pp. 527–9.
[3] *The Times of India* (Bombay), 25th October 1924.
[4] *The Indian Social Reformer* (Bombay), 3rd January, 1925. We are glad to note that during the progress of the Round Table Conference Latthe has changed his view and is prepared to forego such special representation.

insistence on strict reservation of posts in the various services, is not inspired by any anti Brahmin feeling Others again assert that the large class of taxpayers represented by the non-Brahmin classes must have an adequate share of state-support in the form of reserved posts

The logic of these arguments is transparent, and opposed to the accepted criteria of nationality and the guiding principles of social justice Nevertheless only a microscopic minority, even of the small number that recognizes the evils of these demands, propounds that communalism must be abandoned The Chairman of the Reception Committee of the meeting of the Madras non-Brahmin party in 1924 made a strong appeal "to abandon the communal policy pursued hitherto and transform the party into an organization representing the forces working for reform along constitutional lines into which everyone without distinction of caste, religion, or colour would have free admission "[1] The party did not accept this wholesome principle of development until late in 1930

What are the interests which the leaders of the non-Brahmin movement wish to safeguard by means of special representation? If there are any such interests, are they identical for all the castes that are officially included in the category of non-Brahmins? These are questions which it is not at all easy for the protagonists of the movement to answer The economic interests of the artisans, the tenant-farmers, landlords, and mill-workers are not identical All these are very well represented in the non-Brahmin group Nor has there been any attempt, to our knowledge, on the part of the Brahmins during recent times to penalize these classes of people simply because of caste-feelings If any such legislation were introduced the British element in the Government of the country could effectively checkmate it

The non-Brahmin castes can be regarded as one group only in social matters because the attitude of the Brahmins as regards food and social intercourse, and religious instruction and ministration towards them, has been uniform There has been enough awakening in the country for the Brahmins not to try the dangerous path of imposing legal restrictions in these matters Even the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee decided

[1] *The Indian Daily Mail* (Bombay), 14th October, 1924

in 1925 that "the gradation of merit based on birth should not be observed in Indian social life"[1] Whatever liberalizing of the Brahmin attitude in this respect has taken place during the last forty years is mainly due to education and social reform campaign and not to the very recent reserved or communal representation

Reserved representation is thus not necessary Nay, it is harmful in so far as it tends to perpetuate the distinction based on birth Co-operation in the satisfaction of the needs of common social life through the machinery of Government is one of the potent factors that have dissolved tribal bonds and created nation-communities This co-operation may be based on both territorial contiguity and affinity of interests Special representation for some castes, which have, as shown above, interests that are neither common to them, nor necessarily conflicting with the interests of other castes, means the negation of such co operation In countries where the nation-community is strongly built up on the basis of the feeling of unity no such principle is recognized for the representation of the different interests, even when they can be parcelled out into groups with conflicting interests Thus we have not heard of "labour" claiming special representation in the British Parliament Where it is a question of engendering a feeling of unity the people must be made to co-operate irrespective of their caste It is only by such activity that the feeling of nation-community can be created To harp on the caste-differences and to allow special representation is to set at naught the fundamental condition for the rise of community feeling

Certain types of non-Brahmin leaders find it easy to secure a seat on the legislature or a local body through the door of reserved representation, and that is the main reason, perhaps, why they are so strong in claiming it But they fail to see that their example would be soon followed by many of the large castes that comprise at present the non-Brahmin category and their chances of an easy seat would be very much diminished That this is not mere imagination will be clear to anyone who has followed the history of the demand for special representation in Indian political life Ere long

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2nd May, 1925

we shall witness the situation of many different castes that are individually large enough, each clamouring for special representation [1] National life will thus be reduced to an absurdity As it is, the non-Brahmins in the Bombay Presidency, wherever they could have their way, have shown unmistakable tendency to be anti-Brahmin and to harass their Brahmin employees in the matter of transfers, etc [2] Perhaps, in the name of justice and efficiency, the time has come when the interests of the Brahmins have to be protected against the majority party All points considered, special representation is unnecessary and harmful

It has been mentioned above that the other demand of the non-Brahmins, which is already granted, is reservation of posts in the various services This feature has latterly been so far insisted upon by the party that a journalist of long standing recently described it as "immediately and on the surface a movement to secure a larger share of offices in the administration" [3] The principle is also liable, like representation, to be reduced to absurdity by separate demands by individual castes, officially forming the non-Brahmin group There are the clearest indications of this development in the nearest future Not long after the declaration of this policy by the Madras Government it was faced with this situation "The hundreds of small communities into which Indian society is divided were not slow to take advantage of the opportunity which was so conveniently afforded them, and began to clamour for special representation in the Legislature, local bodies, the public services, and even educational institutions The Government, in which also the non-Brahmin element was very influential, tried to satisfy the ever-increasing demand for the plums of office, but naturally could not succeed It created jealousies and enmities which have now reacted with disastrous effect on the party" [4]

The reasons on which reservation of posts can be supported are two First, that the Brahmins and other castes, which

[1] Between the time this was written and is appearing in print the Marwaris of Calcutta put forward a plea for special representation

[2] *Memorandum submitted by the Government of Bombay to the Indian Statutory Commission*, 1928, p 229

[3] *Indian Social Reformer*, 11th February, 1928

[4] *The Indian Daily Mail* (Bombay), 14th October, 1924

have a very strong majority in the personnel of the services, can and do harass the populace simply because they are non-Brahmins. Second, that in the selection for fresh vacancies the dominant castes make it impossible for the non Brahmins to get the posts. The former allegation is sometimes made, but our experience does not lead us to believe that such harassment exists on an appreciable scale. Even if it did exist, there is enough general awakening to bring the offenders immediately to book. Caste feeling being what it is, it is very likely that strong bias in favour of one's caste-fellows leads many to prefer them or to use influence in their favour to the detriment of the non-Brahmins or other castes. If proper precaution can be taken against such a contingency, there would be no scope for the vicious principle of the reservation of posts. Such precaution, it appears to us, can be effectively taken if all recruitment to all the public services is made on the results of competitive examinations held by a board consisting of persons well-known for their liberal and casteless views.

The problem of the depressed classes, in so far as it is the result of the caste system, deserves special treatment. Among these classes are castes that follow the skilled occupations of tanning, shoe-making, and working in bamboo and cane. These are considered so low by the other Hindus that, as pointed out before, they were not allowed to approach other castes within a measurable distance. They have thus been segregated most effectively for centuries. Their ideas of cleanliness have lagged very far behind those of caste-Hindus. Education has never been a luxury enjoyed by them. Utterly despised by the higher sections of society they have had no incentive to imitate them. Those who feel that the inhuman treatment of these very useful classes of society is wrong realize that a change in it depends as much upon reform in the habits of these classes as upon a change in the attitude of the caste-Hindus. To alter the habits of these people education, both through teaching and propaganda, is essential. Some aspects of these habits also depend on the economic position of these classes. To better the economic position of the depressed classes is thus necessary in order to bring about a real change in their social status.

In the Maratha region since the time of Jyotirao Phooley,

all reformers who have felt the injustice of the situation have begun their campaign with provision for the education of the members of the depressed classes

Individual workers like Messrs V R Shinde and A V Thakkar have done much not only to rouse the feeling of the caste-Hindus against the unjust doctrine of untouchability but also to prepare the depressed classes for better treatment by spreading education amongst them The problem of the removal of untouchability is now made a national one through the efforts of Mahatma Gandhi We have already dealt with the liberalizing consequences of certain administrative aspects of the British rule The campaign has, in no small measure, benefited by the efforts made by Christian and Muhammadan missionaries to convert the depressed classes to their faiths The more reasonable section of the high-caste Hindus have sensed a real danger to their faith in allowing their doctrine of untouchability to drive away into the folds of other faiths members of the untouchable castes—members who have been quite good and devout Hindus

The result of this many-sided attack is to be seen in the change of viewpoint of many a member of the higher castes Incidents like the following one from Bengal are more and more to be witnessed "Kulin Brahmins of Nabadwip, Shantipur, Krishnagar, Kustia and other places accepted and drank water from the hands of Namashudras, washermen, boatmen, dais, and other untouchables and drank the water amidst scenes of great enthusiasm Young Brahmins and old Bhattacharyas, Mukherjis, Banerjis, Chatterjis, Maitras, all took part in the interesting function "[1] In their determined effort to pass through the roads of Vaikam in Tranvancore in 1924, which were, in the caste regime prohibited to the untouchables, these latter were helped by many a high-caste Hindu While the trustees of Hindu temples, taking shelter behind certain decisions of the Privy Council of doubtful applicability, have closed the temple doors to the untouchables, individual owners of private temples have allowed free access for all classes of Hindus to the temples under their management This is not to say that there is no organized effort to combat the spread of the doctrine of

[1] *Forward* (Calcutta), 6th March, 1924

anti untouchability In the beginning of 1925 a number of merchants of Bombay, among whom were included some of the leading public men, convened a meeting of orthodox Hindus Almost every speaker denounced what they called the heresies of Gandhi in respect of untouchability, and declared that the Hindu religion was in danger at his hands [1] It is more or less clear that the conflict will last for some time to come, and it is the duty of those who have no belief in untouchability to preach its abolition and to demonstrate their belief in their own conduct

Such being the attitude of high caste Hindus in general, there is much justification for demanding some representation for the untouchable classes in the local and legislative bodies The classes, ground down by age long tradition, have not yet produced a sufficient number of men who can organize them to take care of their rights by public agitation We have remarked that a large part of the problem of the removal of untouchability centres round the habits and customs of the untouchable castes Education of these classes is a crying necessity Poverty and established practice conspire to make them shun education Under the circumstances a liberal system of stipends for their members at all stages of education is highly desirable

The growth of city life with its migratory population has given rise to hotels and restaurants The exigencies of office work have forced city people to put aside their old ideas of purity Caste-Hindus have to eat articles of food prepared by Christians, Musalmans, or Persians, because Hindu restaurants have not been easily or equally accessible during office hours In Hindu hotels, they have to take their meals in the company of people of almost any caste—as the hotel-keeper cannot manage to reserve accommodation for members of different castes What was originally done under pressure of necessity has become a matter of routine with many in their city life This freedom from caste-restrictions about food, though seen in the city, is a mere garb that is usually cast aside by city people when they go to their villages The force of custom and sentiment is so great that it has led the people to create a dual standard of life rather than break

[1] *The Times of India*, 5th January, 1925

with their village folk Especially is this true of all formal occasions While this slow and enforced change was taking place special dinners whereat persons sit in a row irrespective of caste have, from time to time, been successfully arranged by some associations Conscious effort and the force of flux have effected an altogether healthy and appreciable modification in the people's attitude in the matter of supposed pollution imparted through food and drink by certain classes of people Whereas in Poona a handful of people like M G Ranade and others were subjected to social tyranny and ultimately forced to undergo expiatory rites in 1891–2 for having taken tea at a Christian missionary's place, to-day no one even takes notice of the Brahmins dining at the Government House

In those parts of India, where the untouchables were really unapproachable, certain exigencies of modern life have forced high-caste Hindus to change their attitude and practice to some extent "In towns, where private scavenging and sweeping are enforced, the scavengers and sweepers have not only to go near the houses but have some times to enter into them for scavenging This has done away with distance pollution "[1]

There is much more freedom in the matter of choice of occupation to-day than under the old regime First, new occupations, which require abilities similar to those displayed in older occupations, have arisen out of the new requirements Many of these occupations, like those of draftsmanship and cabinet-making, have come to be looked upon with greater esteem and are better remunerated than their older prototypes Draftsmanship is partially allied to clerkship (in so far as it involves desk-work in an office) and largely to the ancient designer's avocation Recruits to this profession, therefore, hail both from the higher castes of Brahmins and others as well as from the lower castes, such as higher artisans Such occupations as tailoring and shoe-making have appreciated in public esteem partly because of the new machinery making them easy and less tedious, and largely because the new technique and craftsmanship is associated with the new rulers They are, therefore, taken up by more

[1] *Travancore Census*, 1921, p 106

and more members of very high castes Secondly, dislocation of the old economic order and provision of facilities for training in arts and crafts have led to an extensive shifting of the old lines of division between occupations The total result is that at present many members of the Brahmin caste are seen engaged in almost any of the occupations, excepting those of casual labourer, sweeper, and scavenger Many members of the various artisan castes are teachers, shopkeepers, bank clerks, shop assistants, and architects

In the textile mills of Bombay not a few members of even the untouchable castes have found work quite different from what they were used to under the regime of caste Whatever restrictions caste imposed on the choice of occupation have largely ceased to guide individuals, and it is ignorance and lack of enterprise that have kept the occupational unfreedom of caste, even to the extent that it is observed, and not the old ideas of what was considered to be one's traditional or hereditary occupation

The endogamous nature of caste has remained almost the same with this difference that whereas formerly marriage outside one's caste was not to be even thought of, to-day many educated young men and women are prepared to break through the bonds of caste if mutual love or attraction demands it In Bombay we have known many examples, mostly members of younger generation, who have managed their own matrimonial affairs, the parties to which belong to two different castes A large majority of such marriages, known as inter caste or mixed marriages, is formed by couples where the female partner belongs to a caste lower than that of the male partner Yet the opposite variety, where the male partner belongs to a lower caste, is not altogether rare As for the older generation, it may be said without exaggeration that, in spite of the talk about social reform, it has made very little advance in its ideas on the subject of intermarriage When, therefore, elderly persons arrange the marriages of their wards they hardly ever think of going beyond their caste—even though it be a section of a large group—from which to select a bride or a bridegroom If they venture to ignore the limits of the narrowest division—if for example a Chitpavan Brahmin selects a girl from the Karhada Brahmin for his son, in the

aratha country—he is looked up to as a reformer It would e hard to point out examples of marriages between members outright separate castes arranged for their wards by the derly guardians It is the recklessness and enthusiasm of outh alone that is prepared to transgress the bounds of caste or the purpose of marriage

When the city of Bombay began to attract large numbers people from rural areas, the immigrants, with their aditions of caste, began to congregate, as far as possible, ccording to their castes, though the village affinity nfluencing the place of residence, modified this tendency he Brahmin castes of the Maratha country are vegetarians, hile the other castes are usually non-vegetarians The rahmins had the additional motive of escaping bad odours iven out by fish and flesh when they are being dressed, to y to live together in buildings where only Brahmins dwelt 'his tendency for every large caste to live in isolation from ther castes has been steadily growing during the last twenty ears It will be observed that this desire is only the old-aste practice of reserving special parts of the village for the ifferent castes moulded to suit the changed conditions of ity life The inclination of the people was encouraged and ggravated by private charity expressing itself through the hannels of caste With the quickening of caste-consciousness nd the fostering of caste-patriotism, philanthropic persons ave been building houses and chawls to be rented only to heir caste members at moderate rents Charity, intending o further the educational interests of a caste, has found xpression also in providing free hostels to the student embers of the caste As a result, in those areas of Bombay hich are largely inhabited by the middle classes, we find o day whole chawls which are occupied by members of one r two castes with close affinity, whole buildings rented at noderate or even nominal rents only to the members of a articular caste, and hostels giving free accommodation to he students of a particular caste Buildings meant for nembers of particular castes generally bear prominent oards blatantly announcing the fact of their reservation nd where it is a case of individual endowment also the ame of the philanthropic donor Even the colleges and he University are infested with endowments from which

scholarships are to be paid to students of certain specified castes

The introduction of co-operative schemes of amelioration have afforded another opportunity for caste-solidarity to manifest itself Co-operative housing more than any other aspect of co-operative undertaking, has appealed to the caste-spirit, though credit societies of individual castes, like that of the Reddis, are not altogether unknown In fact it would be true to remark that only those co-operative housing societies have succeeded most which have restricted their membership to their caste-fellows Even in business this tendency to restrict the holding of shares to the members of a particular caste is sometimes apparent Recently the Brahmins of Madras started a fund called the "Triplicane Fund", shares in which could be held only by Brahmins Those responsible for starting it included gentlemen of "culture, education, and learning" "Such being the case, we regret that one of the rules of the Fund is so narrowly conceived as to exclude all that are not Brahmins from the right of holding shares It is just this type of exclusiveness that furnishes interested parties like the ministerialists their best nutriment Those who decry the excesses of communalism should themselves first set the example of a healthy, wholesome, non-communal outlook in the practical affairs of life" [1]

One feature of Hindu society during the last thirty or forty years has been the marked tendency for every caste to form its own association comprising all members of the caste speaking the same language In the old regime the caste-panchayat or council was usually restricted to the confines of the village or the town Rarely, if at all, did the jurisdiction of the council, in the case of the majority of the castes, extend beyond these limits "In the large majority of cases, the caste-consciousness is limited by the bounds of the village and its organizations do not extend beyond the village area" [2] The functions of these new organizations are (1) To further the general interests of the caste and particularly to guard its social status in the hierarchy from actual or potential attacks of other castes, (2) to start funds to provide

[1] *The Indian Social Reformer* (Bombay), 16th October, 1926
[2] Matthai, p 65

studentships for the needy and deserving students of the caste, usually at the secondary and college stage of education, and sometimes even to help them to proceed to foreign countries for higher academic qualifications, (3) to help poor people of the caste, (4) and sometimes to try to regulate certain customs of the caste by resolutions passed at the annual meeting of the members of the caste All these objects, excepting perhaps that of providing studentships, were used to be achieved, in a great or a small measure, by an arrangement not always permanent Sometimes an *ad hoc* committee would take up the work and carry it out We have already referred to the stubborn opposition of the Kammalans of Madras to the supreme position of the Brahmins in the hierarchy The Kayasth Prabhus of Poona and many other castes of the Maratha country protested from time to time to the court of the Peshwa against certain restrictions which other castes professed to enforce upon them to stamp their status as low Surely some elderly persons of the particular caste must have volunteered to put its case before the proper tribunal Relief of the poor was not usually a duty undertaken by a caste When a caste decided to apply some of its funds to charitable purposes, it handed over the money to the local priest to be used by him for benevolent purposes The ruling ideals of the time led people to distribute charity in particular channels The ideal was rather to build temples and rest houses, dig wells and tanks, and to endow free feeding at the temples for a certain number of Brahmins and at the public feeding houses for travellers and others in need All this direction of charity was most often preached and accepted without reference to caste Only the artisan castes, which had strong guild-like organizations, had some standing provision for helping the indigent among its members [1] Occasionally a caste would relieve its own poor by feeding them through the headman The funds for this purpose were available from the residue of the fines imposed on the defaulting members of the caste

[1] Ibid, pp 65, 68–9 Even the artisan castes sometimes depended on special collections for a specific purpose The guilds of artisans in Broach, for example, when they required funds, collected them by subscriptions among the members of the caste (*Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Bombay Presidency*, vol i, p 312)

We have noticed above that the Brahmins of South India assembled the Brahmins of four quarters and decided to put a stop to the practice of taking money for a bride prevailing among them The oil-mongers of Kanchi proposed to bind themselves by certain conditions about donations to temples and to observe them as "jātidharma", i e duty which every member owed to his caste [1]

The community-aspect of caste has thus been made more comprehensive, extensive, and permanent More and more of an individual's interests are being catered for by caste Greater caste-consciousness is the outcome The students and the needy who are helped by their caste-funds naturally owe much to their caste and later in life look upon it with feelings of gratitude and pride They feel it their proud duty to strengthen the caste-organization, remembering their obligations to it Thus a vicious circle has been created The feeling of caste solidarity is now so strong that it is truly described as caste-patriotism

From our discussion of the non-Brahmin and the depressed class movements it will be evident that the old hierarchy of caste is no longer acquiesced in Many are the castes that employ priests of their own caste Some of the castes, the goldsmiths of the Maratha country for example, have already started asserting their dignity by refusing to take food at the hands of castes, other than the Brahmin, which, according to their old practice, do not reciprocate that courtesy In this process it is the lower caste that starts the movement in order to raise its own status To add to this the old profession of a teacher, and the more or less new profession of a Government clerk, are coveted by many more castes than was the practice in the old regime There is a veritable scramble for these petty jobs Conflict of claims and opposition has thus replaced the old harmony of demand and acceptance The contrast in the old and new situation is vividly brought out in the description of village conditions in a part of the Madras Presidency existing more than a century ago and those subsisting ten years ago A report on the state of the village in 1808 contains the following "Every village with its twelve 'ayagandeas', as they are denominated, is a petty commonwealth, with the 'mocuddim',

[1] Mookerji, p 186

'potail', 'kapoo', 'reddy', or chief inhabitant, at the head of it, and India is a great assemblage of such commonwealths While the village remains entire, they care not to what power it is transferred "[1] The District Gazetteer of Tinnevelly, on the other hand, had to record in 1917 the following "With all the inducements to co-operation it can scarcely be said that the average Tinnevelly village possesses the strength born of unity General Panchayats are practically unknown, disputes are too readily taken to the law-courts instead of being settled in the village, and the best efforts of the revenue and irrigation officers and of the police are often hampered by deep-seated faction It is among the individual castes that the spirit of cohesion is most clearly seen This often takes the practical form of a 'Mahimai', or general fund, levied by each community for its own use The objects of expenditure are usually the support of temples, mosques, or churches owned by the contributors, occasionally the money is diverted to petitions or litigation in which the caste as a whole is interested "[2] Caste-solidarity has taken the place of village-community

To sum up, social and religious privileges and disabilities born of caste are no longer recognized in law and only partially in custom Only the depressed classes are labouring under certain customary and semi-legal disabilities Caste no longer rigidly determines an individual's occupation, but continues to prescribe almost in its old rigour the circle into which one has to marry One has still to depend very largely on one's caste for help at critical periods of one's life, like marriage and death One's closest companions and friends are mainly delimited by the circle of one's caste The difference between the old regime and contemporary society lies in this that whereas under the ancient organization the facts mentioned above were almost universally true, to-day there is a section of society—the modernly educated persons—small yet important, which has risen above all these restrictions They are bound to serve as beacon-lights to the wavering members of society Attitudes of exclusiveness and distrust, enshrined in the old vernacular

[1] *The Fifth Report from the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, vol ii (ed 1883), p 575

[2] *Madras District Gazetteers Tinnevelly*, vol i, 1917, p 104

proverbs, between caste and caste, still persevere even in the minds of the educated Caste-associations are very common and command the services of even the most highly educated persons to further their object of helping the members of their castes As long as endogamy is prescribed and practised, wider self-interest dictates that one should help the aggrandisement of the members of one's caste For the better the economic prospects for the youths of the caste the greater the chances of getting well-to-do husbands for one's daughters The rule of endogamy is in a way the fundamental factor of contemporary caste

Caste has thus become the centre of an individual's altruistic impulse and philanthropic activities The existence of definite organization has rallied round the caste the feelings of consciousness of kind In the desire to help one's caste-fellows many forget the principles of social justice, and are led to do, consciously or otherwise, injustice to the members of other castes Unfortunately many leaders in civic life are associated with the movement of amelioration of their respective castes The mental undercurrents of those who are to be led breathe distrust of such leaders The conduct of these leaders in the matter of the marriages of their wards —usually in their own caste—strengthens this lack of confidence felt by the populace, and acts as a buttress against the attacks on caste-endogamy Hardly any caste accepts its accredited status or concedes the precedence of another caste, though it may demand such precedence of a caste supposed to be lower than it in the old hierarchy

Economic conditions have led many castes to clamour for petty jobs in the clerical line This factor enhances the feeling of caste-animosity Even the apex of the ancient scheme, the priesthood of the Brahmin, which has been, with one or two exceptions, the great bond of social solidarity in this finely divided society, is being loosened by caste after caste Contemporary caste-society presents the spectacle of self-centred groups more or less in conflict with one another

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

WE have seen that the practice of caste has changed, and also that a section of the Hindus have not only acquiesced in that change but have actively helped it The orthodox Hindus do not like the modifications that have come about owing to changed circumstances They actually deprecate them, and if they had the power they would fain reinstate the old situation The progressive elements on the other hand not only welcome the changes but propose further modifications Among these there are at least three, more or less clearly distinguishable, schools of thought There are those who believe that the best way to bring about the desired end is to hark back to the imagined pure state of Hindu society which was characterized by the existence of only the four traditional castes, viz Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Śūdra The greatest exponent of this point of view is Mahatma Gandhi[1] There are others who would go ahead rather than look back on the past in the vain hope of reinstating it under totally different conditions But they think that the only way in which abolition of caste can be achieved as a concrete fact is, in the first place, to amalgamate the various sub castes of a present day caste, which have much cultural unity and economic similarity Then the castes which are approximately on a footing of equality should be consolidated, and the procedure may be followed till society becomes casteless They contend that this process being slow would afford sufficient time for education and the formation of informed opinion, with the necessary adjunct of the requisite mental adjustment of those classes which are not yet prepared for a wholesale change in their agelong customs The third point of view considers caste, especially in its present form, so degrading in some of its aspects and so anti-national in others, that it would abolish it altogether without any hesitation or delay

[1] *Young India*, by Mahatma Gandhi, 1919–22, pp 479–88

Mahatma Gandhi has not given us a complete programme by means of which he proposes to reinstate the four old orders It is not quite clear whether persons would be assigned to one or the other of these classes on the ground of their birth in a particular caste or on the strength of the occupation they now follow Yet as he lays great stress on birth and heredity and subscribes to the view "once born a Brahmin always a Brahmin", he would no doubt rather rearrange the other castes into their proper groups on the basis of birth If it were sought to put this procedure into operation we do not hesitate to think that there would be great strife among the various castes The Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Śūdra classes have not remained as distinct and intact as the Brahmins There is much difference of opinion as to which of the castes should be included in one or the other of the above three classes Even if an amicable settlement on this point were possible, what about the untouchable classes? Gandhi is vehemently opposed to untouchability, and he would naturally propose some respectable status to these classes Where are they to be provided for? Wherever it may be proposed to include them, there is bound to be a tremendous protest from that class The criterion of birth in a caste for the purposes of the proposed fourfold classification is thus found to be quite unsatisfactory If the actual occupation of an individual is to be the test of his status, how are the modern occupations to be accommodated in this old scheme of fourfold humanity? Even if we successfully adjust the claims of all persons and classify them properly, it is an open question if marriage between the classes is to be permitted or prohibited, or if any social restrictions in the matter of food, etc, are still to continue Altogether it appears to us that a return to the old fourfold division of society is impracticable, and even if accomplished would serve no more useful purpose than that of reminding us of our past heritage [1]

To propose to abolish caste by slow consolidation of the smaller groups into larger ones is to miss the real problem The method has been tried in the Bombay Presidency for the last twenty years and more with disastrous results The

[1] In this connection attention may be drawn to A J Toynbee's criticism of Plato's ideal of four castes *vide Ency of R and E*, vol x, p 552 (*b*)

sub-castes that join together to create a super organization retain their internal feelings of exclusiveness with undiminishing vigour. The new organization takes up a rather militant attitude against other castes, especially those which are popularly regarded as immediately higher or lower than the caste which it represents. And, as pointed out in the last chapter, caste-consciousness becomes more definite and virile. We have seen that, even among the castes which are grouped together for political purposes, the common aim of fighting other castes has not proved strong enough to induce individual castes, comprised in the group, to ignore their claims at the time of the distribution of the spoils of office. As we envisage the situation and as our analysis of contemporary caste must make it clear, the problem of caste arises mainly out of caste patriotism. It is the spirit of caste-patriotism which engenders opposition to other castes, and creates an unhealthy atmosphere for the full growth of national consciousness. It is this caste-patriotism that we have to fight against and totally uproot. If the procedure advocated by the protagonists of the second viewpoint were to prove successful, we believe the problem of diminishing caste-patriotism will be ever so much more difficult. It would lead to three or four large groups being solidly organized for pushing the interests of each even at the cost of the others. Acute conflict will be the only consequence. Further, during this lengthy process of slow amalgamation those who will marry in defiance of the barriers of sub-caste will still be imbued with caste-mentality. The main problem will thus remain for years as acute as at present.

The true remedy against the present evil of caste is that we must fight it all round with a bold front without making any compromise. It is caste-patriotism that must be killed. Anything, either in our individual capacity or in our administration that gives prominence to caste tends to create in the minds of the members of a caste tender feelings about it. It follows from this that in order to diminish caste loyalty the first step that we should take is to ignore it altogether. The State must make it clear by its actions that it does not recognize caste as caste, though its individual members may be guided by its group existence. It ought forthwith to cease making any inquiry about a citizen's caste. Caste

must be regarded as a purely individual concern with which the State as the national organization should have nothing to do Neither in official records, nor in applications, nor in statistical returns must the caste of a citizen be recorded The Census need not busy itself with recording the castes of individuals nor should it present any tables by castes

Every educated and progressive Hindu leader ought to ignore caste He must not only denounce the institution on the platform and in the press, but must show by his way of living that his professions are sincere He should never associate himself with any caste council, even though it may be doing some little immediate good to its members, always remembering that even the good emanating from a fundamental evil is so much tainted that it loses the moral characteristics of the good If prominent leaders continue dinning into the ears of their followers that thinking in terms of caste is an unadulterated evil, and if they further carry out their precepts in practice, we are sure the sentiment of caste loyalty will slowly die a natural death We have to create an atmosphere where even partially educated people should be ashamed of boasting of their caste and of decrying the caste of others in place of the present situation where individuals proudly and blatantly speak of their castes and caste-associations We contend this can be achieved by constant preaching and unfailing practice of the leaders

Fusion of blood has been found to be an effective method of cementing alliances and nurturing nationalities The history of royal families and of European nations is replete with such examples To further our national ideals we must resort to the same procedure Caste sets its face against such a custom, as it is of the essence of caste that marriage must be within its limits That parents must seek mates for their children from among the members of their caste is a circumstance that forces people in no small measure to make friendships in the caste and in other ways to help its aggrandizing programme Economic progress of one's caste means increased facility for finding out well-to-do husbands for one's daughters or wives for sons Once marriage becomes free and unfettered by extraneous considerations, one of the inner motives for participation in the organized activities of a caste will vanish

The Special Marriage Amendment Act, though not perfect in its provisions, now makes it possible for persons to marry outside their caste with self respect and honesty More and more individuals must be found to take advantage of the Act and to enter into inter-caste marriages We believe this culmination is not far off As marriage comes to be arranged by the young parties in preference to their elders, restrictions of caste on marriage will vanish in proportion We have seen that most of such inter-caste marriages that have taken place were managed by the youth, and their parents and guardians had no effective voice therein As marriage becomes an affair to be managed among the young by their own choice, proper opportunities for the young people to come into touch with those of the opposite sex must be provided Otherwise marriage either becomes difficult or maladjusted That is the experience of many parents and guardians who have educated their daughters or female wards up to the highest standards of university education It appears to us that co-education at all stages of instruction is the best method of bringing together young people of opposite sex, apart from its being the best prophylactic for sex morals The enthusiasm of youth will surely transcend the artificial bounds of caste

Thus while caste would be ignored and caste-patriotism actively denounced, the people who marry without reference to caste would not only create a casteless atmosphere for the management of civic affairs, but would rear up the next generation, which would be still more hostile to caste Even though uneducated and village folk may continue to marry in their own castes, the further evil effects of endogamy, viz the creation of caste-patriotism, would be effectively checked

In the previous chapter we have shown that untouchability is the last of the social disabilities of the caste regime still present with us We have also indicated that it must be rigorously put down in all public institutions We have also suggested, contrary to our confirmed view about ignoring caste, that the present untouchable classes should be given special educational facilities For education, with the consequent amelioration of economic position, will alone enable the reformers to solve the problem of untouchability,

and no amount of mere propaganda against it can achieve that end

As the result of our analysis we saw that the old bonds of this finely graded society have dwindled away Some of these bonds, viz of the village economy, are such that, however we may regret their decadence, we cannot reinstate them We are sorry, but, in full realization of the tremendous changes in the social condition of man, we make peace with the new era On the other hand, the feature of contemporary Hindu society which tends to snap the running thread of common priesthood is to our mind fundamentally harmful It is not suggested that we should like to see the Brahmin enthroned once again as the monopolist of priestly services in direct opposition to the pronounced views of some of the higher castes amongst the non-Brahmins We think that the facts must be squarely faced by all the leaders of Hindu society and particularly by the orthodox ones We strongly believe that the time has arrived when the Hindus must not leave their priestly function in the hands of anybody who chooses to parade himself as a priest A central organization with provincial branches should be started to impart training in priesthood Only those who hold the requisite certificates from this association should be allowed to practise the profession In the matter of admission, the orthodox section should unconditionally surrender itself to the reformed view, and allow any one possessing the minimum standard of education the right to join the institutions maintained by this association for training in priestcraft No longer should the old distinction between Vedic rites and non-Vedic ones be maintained It must be the choice of the worshipper to ask his priest to conduct his service either according to the Vedic formulæ or the Puranic ones So long as the overwhelming majority continue to believe in ritualism, with all the past sins of the priestly class, it is better to have well-informed priests, who should be asked to pledge themselves that they shall conduct their service according to the dictates of the worshipper as to whether the one or the other type of formulæ be used It would provide Hindu society with its old bond of a common priesthood, based not on hereditary right but on liking and capacity It would at the same time take the edge off the non-Brahmin clamour against the Brahmin priests

The present political upheaval has liberated tremendous psychical energy which, it appears to us, if properly utilized by the leaders, should lead to the achievement of the reforms advocated above Perhaps a sceptic whispers, "Such revolutions are not brought about in the lethargic types of Indian climes" Him we only remind that this apparently lethargic land and its peoples have, in the past, proved themselves capable of truly great achievements The phenomenon of the conquering Indo-Aryans, who were passionate eaters of flesh and drinkers of intoxicating beverages, settling down as the upper castes of Hindu society and abjuring their coveted food and drink for centuries, is a moral triumph of the people of India, for which there is hardly any parallel in human history The same people, now called upon to throw off caste, would rise to the occasion and achieve a still greater triumph

APPENDIX A

PUNJAB

Name of Caste (Number of individuals measured is given in parentheses)	Cephalic Index		Nasal Index		Cephalic Length		Cephalic Breadth		Nasal Length		Nasal Breadth	
	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Arora (27)	72 79	3 8	71 60	5 05	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Awan (33)	74 45	2 73	69 21	5 85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Biloch (60)	80 21	4 68	69 81	5 70	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chuhra (80)	73 49	2 69	75 29	6 04	186 74	6 15	137 16	4 75	48 06	2 21	36 11	2 45
Gujar (13)	72 30	2 66	67 37	4 87	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kanet Kulu (60)	74 11	2 57	74	5 98	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kanet Lahoul (30)	77 48	2 37	66 45	5 53	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Khatri (60)	74 15	3 02	73 30	6 89	185 72	6 05	137 50	5 24	48 82	2 76	35 70	2 81
Machhi (19)	72 50	1 82	70 29	5 22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pathan (80)	76 55	3 50	68 70	5 18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sikh (80)	72 76	2 92	69 10	6 06	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

M = Mean, St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX B

UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

Name of Caste (Number of individuals measured is given in parentheses)		Cephalic Index		Nasal Index		Cephalic Length		Cephalic Breadth		Nasal Length		Nasal Breadth	
		M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Bania	(80)	72 02	3 36	80 55	9 28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Babhan	(26)	73 52	2 25	73 60	7 24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bhar	(100)	73 66	3 06	81 97	8 59	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brahmin	(100)	73 29	3 12	74 88	8 02	187 56	5 58	137 42	4 60	46 57	3 04	34 72	2 70
Chamar	(100)	72 90	2 92	86 52	7 64	185 18	5 79	134 98	4 21	41 02	2 75	35 19	2 20
Chhatri	(100)	73 12	3 12	78 36	7 70	188 35	6 51	137 68	4 60	45 80	3 76	35 65	2 52
Dom	(100)	74 28	3 54	83 60	8 86	183 91	6 63	136 40	4 49	45 44	3 47	37 72	2 65
Kayasth	(100)	72 48	2 99	78 87	8 22	186 62	5 75	135 42	4 91	44 66	3 19	34 99	2 54
Khatri	(15)	71 98	2 71	79 15	9 29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kol	(32)	72 51	2 96	82 89	7 42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kurmi	(100)	73 25	3 23	79 46	8 38	184 05	6 21	135 13	4 12	44 02	2 95	34 84	2 56
Lohar	(45)	72 93	3 34	83 45	11 43	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Musahar	(18)	74 29	2 94	86 17	7 84	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pasi	(100)	72 68	3 21	85 92	9 11	185 10	6 89	134 48	3 87	41 26	3 21	35 23	2 28
Tharu	(65)	74 11	3 06	80 30	9 12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

M = Mean, St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX C

BIHAR

Name of Caste (Number of individuals measured is given in parentheses)	Cephalic Index		Nasal Index		Cephalic Length		Cephalic Breadth		Nasal Length		Nasal Breadth	
	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Babhan (59)	76 98	3 66	73 55	7 02	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bind (13)	73 68	3 64	82 76	7 68	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brahmin (67)	74 91	3 02	73 24	6 35	187 88	6 27	140 81	4 74	49 33	3 53	36 11	2 54
Dom Maghaya (100)	76 21	3 25	82 58	6 98	186 37	6 29	142 20	4 26	48 04	3 09	39 62	2 42
Chamar (62)	76 26	4 35	82 93	7 20	184 42	7 28	140 35	5 28	46 08	2 90	38 13	2 52
Kurmi (71)	75 82	3 50	79 04	6 96	186 97	6 67	141 55	4 54	47 66	3 46	37 45	2 42
Musahar (77)	75 79	2 91	89 20	8 86	183 17	5 91	138 69	4 18	45 52	3 01	40 40	2 97

M = Mean, St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX D

BENGAL

Name of Caste (Number of individuals measured is given in parentheses)	Cephalic Index		Nasal Index		Cephalic Length		Cephalic Breadth		Nasal Length		Nasal Breadth	
	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Brahmin (100)	78 89	3 63	70 89	6 85	181 76	5 82	143 25	4 54	49 71	4 09	35 09	2 72
Chandal (67)	78 11	4 04	74 27	6 83	183 31	6 94	143 18	4 32	49 69	2 69	36 79	2 88
Kayastha (100)	78 30	3 82	70 78	6 34	182 47	6 06	142 88	4 95	50 19	3 09	35 39	2 52
Koibarta (100)	77 57	3 85	76 68	6 70	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Muchi (27)	77 22	3 55	75 30	6 92	182 93	6 76	142	4 45	49 19	2 94	36 89	2 66
Rajbansi (100)	75 36	3 21	76 86	5 81	186 28	6 85	140 26	5 15	48 96	2 85	37 57	2 52
Sadgop (48)	77 95	3 23	74 24	7 46	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

M = Mean St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX E

BOMBAY

Name of Caste (Number of individuals measured is given in parentheses)	Cephalic Index		Nasal Index		Cephalic Length		Cephalic Breadth		Nasal Length		Nasal Breadth	
	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Bhil Khandesh (103)	72 56	3 04	95 80	11 84	182 92	6 11	132 61	4 43	41 12	3 49	39 05	3 14
Chitpavan Brahmin (100)	77 41	3 95	76 99	6 60	186 43	7 37	144 25	5 16	49 34	3 26	37 87	2 15
Deshasth Brahmin (100)	77 09	4 37	79 73	6 14	185 5	6 39	142 94	5 41	48 93	2 91	38 81	2 25
Katkari (109)	74 37	2 65	88 46	8 05	178 86	6 20	133 04	3 95	44 04	2 94	38 78	2 49
Kunbi (100)	77 52	4 36	79 44	5 70	180 10	6 85	139 49	5 55	47 81	2 62	37 95	2 09
Mahar (100)	77 17	3 55	82 23	6 20	181 40	5 83	140 12	5 15	47 21	2 58	38 73	2 37
Maratha (High Caste) (100)	76 34	4 11	71 47	6 35	184 62	6 39	140 92	6 52	52 02	3 37	37 01	2 44
Maratha Ghati (100)	78 33	4 53	80 32	7 47	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nagar Brahmin (100)	79 93	4 33	73 58	7 66	184 51	7 47	147 16	5 97	50 76	3 56	37 18	2 57
Prabhu (100)	80 00	3 80	76 18	7 13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shenvi Brahmin (100)	79 08	4 06	75 15	7 46	186 22	7 18	147 15	5 29	50 27	3 63	37 62	2 36
Son Koli (100)	77 62	3 24	76 77	6 96	185 00	5 83	143 45	4 71	49 62	3 15	37 98	2 62
Vani (Gujarat) (139)	78 52	3 46	76 80	8 09	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

M = Mean, St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX F

MADRAS

Caste		Language	Cephalic Index		Nasal Index	
			M	St Dev	M	St Dev
Kapu	(49)	Telugu	78 08	3 70	—	—
Smarta Brahmin	(60)	Canarese	78 45	4 41	—	—
Coorg	(32)	Kodagu	79 72	3 79	72 12	5 22
Billava	(50)	Tulu	80 36	4 40	—	—
Sivalli	(40)	,,	80 44	5 21	—	—
Vakkaliga	(50)	Canarese	81 76	5 03	—	—
Toda	(76)	Toda	73 36	2 22	—	—
Yeruva	(25)	Canarese	73 48	3 06	89 76	5 26
Vellal	(40)	Tamil	73 92	2 74	—	—
Nayar	(39)	Malayalam	74 44	2 85	—	—
Pattar Brahmin	(25)	Tamil	74 44	3 31	—	—
Tamil Brahmin	(40)	,,	76 55	3 44	—	—

M = Mean , St Dev = Standard Deviation

APPENDIX G

DIFFERENTIAL INDEX

(Based on six characters Cephalic index, cephalic length, cephalic breadth, nasal index, nasal length, and nasal breadth)

Punjab

Chuhra and Khatri	88

United Provinces

Brahmin and Chhatri	89
,, ,, Kayasth	1 47
,, ,, Kurmi	1 83
,, Dom	2 56
,, ,, Pasi	3 17
,, Chamar	3 32
Pasi and Chamar	27
Kurmi and ,,	1 71

Bihar

Brahmin and Kurmi	1 75
,, ,, Chamar	2 42
,, ,, Dom	2 95
Chamar and Kurmi	1 45

Bengal

Brahmin and Kayastha	43
,, ,, Chandal	1 11

Bombay

Deshasth Brahmin and Son Koli	95
,, ,, ,, Chitpavan Brahmin	1 02
,, ,, ,, Mahar	1 61
,, ,, ,, Kunbi	1 73
,, ,, ,, Shenvi Brahmin	2 10
,, ,, ,, Nagar Brahmin	2 59
,, ,, ,, High Caste Maratha	2 64

General

U P Kurmi and Bihar Kurmi	3 49
U P Chamar and Bihar Chamar	4 01

U P Brahmin and Punjab Chuhra	1 02
,, ,, ,, ,, Khatri	1 38
,, ,, ,, Bihar Brahmin	2 05
,, ,, ,, Chitpavan Brahmin	3 66
,, ,, ,, Deshasth Brahmin	3 94

Bengal Brahmin and Shenvi Brahmin	2 30
,, ,, ,, Chitpavan Brahmin	2 44
,, ,, ,, Bihar Brahmin	2 52
,, ,, Deshasth Brahmin	2 96
,, ,, ,, U P Brahmin	3 89

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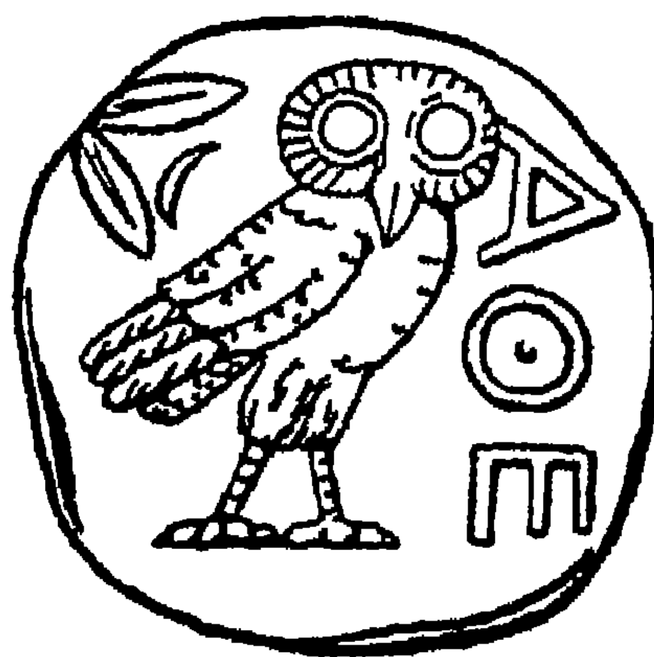
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